

FRINGE

WARE™

REVIEW

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PREMIER
ISSUE



PARENTAL
ADVISORY

CONTAINS EXPLICIT THOUGHTS

fringeoids * contents

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$1/e^2$

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notable musings...

"The reinvention of daily life means marching off the edge of our maps."

— **Bob Black**, *The Abolition Of Work*

"People just associate computers with hippies or nerdballs, and that's just not true anymore."

— **Jaime Levy**, publisher of *Electronic Hollywood*

"There is no methadone clinic for Internet Relay Chat or Multi-User Dungeons — they always say, know the hardest drugs by the fact that their chemical names are used on the street: IRC, MUD... PCP of the hyperreal, transreal, more real than real Internet."

— **Andy Hawks**, founder of *Future Culture* email list

"Are the fundamental values of our society so universal and enduring that they will not be threatened by the advent of new technologies or any new subcultures such technologies produce?"

— **Edward Markey (D-Mass)**, US House Telecommunications Subcommittee

"I notice the expression 'multiplicity' being kicked around at one conference or another... apparently a happening thing all of a sudden. That's nice to see, because the advantage of multiplicity as a political strategy is that it's a way of disrupting the idea that people are single personalities, which is a method of political control."

— **Allucquere Rosanne Stone**, UT/Austin ACTLab

"I agree it is a very good document, and I envy it... I just wish you guys [sic] would use it. Your assertion about 'the freest country' fails because you don't... it does no good to have such a document just rotting away locked up somewhere, after even banning the material it's printed on."

— **Jyrki Kuoppala**, on *Usenet*

"Over romanticization of government power and violence is peculiar to writers of techno-thrillers and certain libertarians... Markets apply 'force' (incentives) across a wide front. They do not require fear or acquiescence to survive."

— **Duncan Frissell**, on *cypherpunks* email list

"Virtual communities compel conversations about the nature of the community itself."

— **Sherry Turkle**, MU* research at MIT

"People, even the crazy ones are social organisms. We don't really like to be disliked too widely, we like to have an audience, if nothing else. So that's the underpinnings..."

— **Tom Jennings**, *FidoNet* founder

"Arise, world, you have nothing to lose but your barbed wire fences."

— **Timothy C. May**, *The Cryptoanarchist Manifesto*

"I feel like we all live together somewhere in the distant present!"

— **Mark Frauenfelder**, editor of *boING-boING* magazine

"Natural science is concerned only with the observer's experience of things. Never with the way things experience us."

— **R. D. Laing**, *The Politics Of Experience*

"Where were you when the page was blank?"

— **Truman Capote**

"you have new mail waiting"

— **Unix shell**

Cringe

Fringe

Cringe

Marshall McLuhan

Marshall McLuhan
Personal Digital Assistant

Personal Digital Assistant
Venture Capital

Venture Capital

CompuServe

Computer Professional
Computer Professional

otaku-zoku

Four-Color Advertising
otaku-zoku

...an unending barrage of
"What's-In/What's-Out" lists
which serve at best to
enumerate cool points through
a boring quantification of
overly-narrative, solipsist
reductionism

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reductionism...

&&&!

Fringe

R. D. Laing

Transpersonal Novelty Agent
R. D. Laing

Transpersonal Novelty Agent
Angel Capital

Angel Capital

Public Access Unix

Slacker/Hacker
Slacker/Hacker

go-me-no-sense, eh?

go-me-no-sense, eh?
Bartered Advertising

Text & Illustration
Bartered Advertising

Text & Illustration

“...which led me to
make the slur about a
bunch of greedy Yups
stealing our lunch-
money for the right to
comm with friends...”

FRINGE WARE REVIEW

discorporate amerika

I love to write.

I started thinking one day about what it'd take, in a not-so-distant near-future, to be able to just write. To be able to have a decent half acre to live on, with a modest home and big garden.... To have enough food to eat well, enough energy to run the computer, access to Internet for exchange of ideas and for community beyond the limits of my physical presence... and then I'd just write. Thus began my life's mind virus.

I also love to program computers; been doing that for many years on a trail strung through several big corporations and government departments. But after a prolonged legal battle with one of those employers, I got pretty sick of *work* and started paying a lot more attention to *writing*.

So far, I've kept overwhelmingly busy, learned much more, much faster than in any previous *work* setting, and generally improved my "career" from most outside POV's. So far, I've paid my bills, kept on decent terms with local authorities and would generally rather kill than be forced back into a *corporate job*. Plus, I've done a lot of writing. The virus has taken effect.

The foremost story in my mind, however, the one about being able to exist just living and writing, kept growing and refining but never seemed to fit any particular magazine.

A co-conspirator, Jon Lebkowsky, expressed similar views about working and writing. We recognized similar opportuni-

ties for creative business from the stories we'd been covering. We knew the Old Ways of doing business in America, i.e. heavily capitalized worker/manager strategies of *industrialism*, were basically dead or dying. Whatever would supplant them was going to creep in from the fringes of culture and technology. It would require organizations that could adapt quickly and build links across the planet, that could establish new forms of marketplace and exchange. It would take people who were severely unschooled in current ways of doing business, and basically nuts by *anybody's* standards. So Jon and I decided to start a partnership. The mind virus has spread, or maybe congealed into more capable biomass.

It should come as little surprise that Jon and I decided to write about

our business. In fact, we've focused much of our activity around publishing this new periodical, *Fringe Ware Review*. You can check the *Mission Statement* in back to evaluate our intentions and pursuits... Basically, we present the story that couldn't be written elsewhere, thus affording the virus its proper station as cherished lifeform.

Think of this premier issue of *FWR* as one part blueprint and two parts trampoline. Our format may mutate over time, but we'll start by blending essay and tutorial

with fiction and review, and selected advertisement, to develop themes and memes, rants and riffs over our principle goal: *building community around a fringe marketplace*. That's the blueprint.

In this first issue we focus on one of the best places to find the prototypical Fringe community and marketplace: *Internet*. And we let our foremost community builders do the talking... Selections from/about Sterling, Jennings, Laing and Black set a stage for discourse. Reports on Cryptoanarchy, email list resources and ShareText barter-

ing provide mechanics for nurturing our meme(s). Writings by some of the *fringeful* characters you'll ever find out on the Net — Asif Production's Tod Foley, gonzo fiction master Don

Webb, and co-founder of the *LERI-L Metaprogramming* email list "Scotto" — provide synthesis. Last but not least, products and reviews show what's being accomplished. That's the trampoline.

In retrospect, this premier issue of *FWR* focuses pointedly on its subtext: *Fringe Use of Internet* (FUI?) ... the second issue focuses on making gizmos and wares. We're looking for artists and writers in the field — *send us some email*. Thanx!



path-o-logic

..by Paco Xander Nathan

People care for the things they love. People spend time on things which they enjoy. This is a publication about physical poetry and the people involved and ephemeral ties that pull us together in these pursuits.

We're talking about the **Fringes** which human societies have always sent to greet the Unknown.

We're not talking about wild futureshock projections or some acclaimed PhD's white papers for the next *Joint Int'l Worldthink Conference*. In today's world of massive connections mediated by rapidly accelerating technology - AT&T, CNN, Reuters, Time/Warner, MTV, CompuServe, etc., to provide a few pointers - the first Seduction a person encounters within infoglut is to be disinfotainment about **The Future**, about **Change**,

about **What's going to Happen?** Future Talk becomes the "fiat monetary system" of informational exchange, as the elite in an information society - those who wield influence over the content of high-profile media - focus discussion on future-based expectations. Just like buying on credit. Which breeds more talk about expectations and inflated speculations, to the point where even the so-called "public access" bandwidths, such as Access TV, Usenet, zines, etc., get stuffed full of banter about **Gee won't that be cool someday**. Meanwhile, though absorbed in the future tense of what may be real and what may not, people still buy toilet paper. And groceries, and insurance. So people go to work, half-numbed by overstimulation, and the information society laughingly transforms its allure of technology and new forms of access into yet another scam for coercion and the diversion of productivity and wealth.

We're not here to talk about **change**, because Life is **change**, and if you can read this and feel any kind of response, then we'll assume that you're already a field expert about Life.

We're not here to talk about the future; what happens out on the **Fringe** will ultimately become the future for mainstream anyway, or at least some subset of it will. We're here to pose a primary question, then explore answers to it through example:

QUESTION #1 - WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

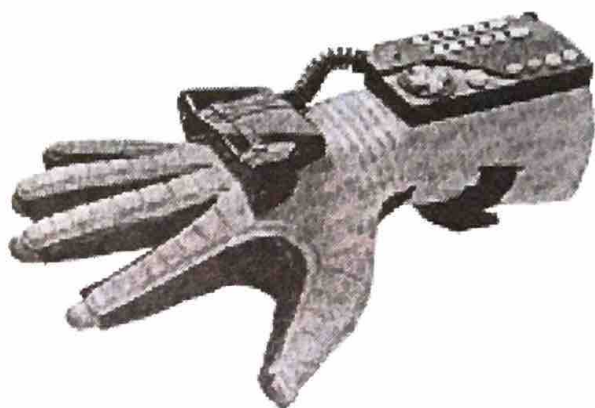
Our focus might seem to pan heavily toward **technology**... However, the Second Seduction a person encounters in a Modern World is the arbitrary distinction between "levels" of **technology** - the idea that "some things are high tech and maybe you just don't have the background to understand them or be involved." Bullshit, *you* are technology. *We* are technology, which is to imply nothing more than a pursuit of craft, of the

use of tools to better our survival as individuals, as communities, as expressions.

The distinctions of high-tech vs. low-tech provide a sophistry for undermining confidence. "You really cannot argue with me about this issue until you have endured for as much higher education as I

have." *Not*. They have programmed It and It has programmed Them. We as creatures inevitably adapt. Our biology demands that we adapt. If you spend your time in a pursuit, you identify with it. If you concentrate on the use of certain kinds of tools and techniques, you begin to master them for the expression of an art / craft.

Ultimately, the widgets and gizmos produced within a culture account for time spent by its participants, they provide a record of its technology, of its craft, of its expressions, of its passions. Time spent in a basement shop tinkering to produce the world's next weird gizmo is a physical poetry as much as any ballet or sculpture. So in tribute to those expressions, we will explore the gizmos of the **Fringe**, we will seek out what is happening on the Edges:



"We're out on the Fringes looking around and reporting what people have done and building a community that works with computers for its communications and trying to build a market for exchange of gizmos and wares that account for our species' passion to encounter the Unknown"

QUESTION #2 - WHAT ELSE IS BEING DONE?

Change and technology are endemic to each of us. Machines inevitably become part of our community. Right now, channels are open and available for most people in the world to communicate with most other people in the world, at a cost of less than you probably already pay for entertainment, e.g. movies, cable TV, etc. Communication in an of itself is sterile, to look at the millions of people now talking at this moment via computers (adaptable machines) of one form or another would be pointless, except that communication is an artifact of community. To become a part of each other, we become part of a machine, and in so doing become part of a greater whole, a Matrix, a Net which itself can be viewed as living, changing, adapting, expressing.

PSYCHOSES AS MEANS OF SURVIVAL

Note that any merger with machine implies a kind of psychosis: a loss of identity which begets a panorama of identities - that is the nature of our cybernetic link. One early warning sign from the Fringe

is that people who spend vast portions of their time communicating with many others via computers tend to develop dissociative states, psychoses as means of survival. Not just weirdoes, but almost everybody. Maybe that's where people are headed anyway... Regardless, it's happening now and one of the ways that people reclaim a state of health within psychosis is to throw themselves into pursuits, into the things they love, to build strange expressions of thought and character, to hammer on the hallucinatory forge of maladaptivity until it becomes a Real Thing for all the rest of the world to see, feel, and to experience for themselves.

Paranoid Thought For The Day: mainstream media won't tell you about what you'll find here. Why? Possibly because "It's too weird," or "It just won't sell," or "It's potentially dangerous." Who cares to deconstruct the mainstream?

Our point is that we're out on the Fringes looking around and reporting what people have done and building a community that works with computers for its communications and trying to build a market for exchange of gizmos and wares that account for our

species' passion to encounter the Unknown.

We've had some great progenitors: *BOING-boING*, *Whole Earth Review*, *Factsheet Five*, *The WELL*, *Loompanics*, *Mondo 2000*, etc., many of which have been our formulative grounds for work as individual writers. But in the context of this work, we found that many important aspects of the Fringes, according to our agenda, were being overlooked. So we sent a message across Internet:

WELCOME to the email list for people who hang out on the Fringes of art, society and technology, sponsored by.. FringeWare Inc. To post a message or join/leave the list, send email to:

fringeware@wixer.bga.com

This is a moderated list combined with an automated file/list server.. Mailings go out as we see messages come in; we'll moderate and try to pace mailings to have a consistent daily rate. Messages are digested weekly, each Sunday night, and stored in the archives as YMMDD.msg.. The catalog is updated each new moon. If you'd rather get a weekly digest instead of daily mailings, send email about it..

So send in yer email! DIY info, resources for garage tech, announcements for shows, product inquiries, projects, etc...

...and have since been greeted by overwhelmingly affirmative response, encouragement, participation and empirical evidence that Fringes really exit. And this of course begs our ultimate topic for question and exploration, e.g. "advice from the locals":

QUESTION #3 - WHERE TO JACK IN?

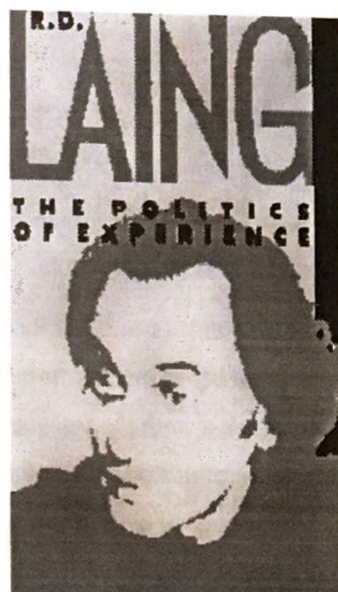
Take a look around...

1/e²

"Humanity is estranged from its authentic possibilities" — R.D. Laing, intro to *Politics of Experience*

In the late 60's R.D. Laing wrote of interexperience, which is "the relation between my experience of you and your experience of me" - as close as we can come to shared experience and extreme communication. I can't merge my self or various selves with yours, but I can merge my experience of you with your experience of me. (As Laing found, the occasional psychotic break may be a foundation for feeling and communication, but that's another track).

The more I know of your experience, and the more you know of mine, the



closer we can come to the kind of sharing that builds true community. Now, cut to the 90's - Fed prosecutor Gail Thackeray on computer crime: she describes the hacker stereotype, the sense of the kid in the basement, untouched by sunlight, isolated from the world... But wait! This ain't isolation - (s)he's come as close as contemporary tech allows to Jacking In To The Matrix, been awake within a sea of real and constructed personalities in email/chat/newsgroups, experiencing a community invisible to the offline world.

We don't advocate that you stay buried in a basement with your terminal unless you happen to dig that lifestyle, but we want to clarify what Thackeray, et.al. might not realize,

that "hackers" are not solitary technodweebs, not criminals, but rather digital explorers who have online community based on digital interexperience.

FringeWare Inc. is a street market in cyberspace, where ideas and tools are traded and shared among digital and cultural hackers on the electronic frontier. Fringe Ware Review is a reflection of that cultural milieu; our vision is community development online, beyond usual geocentric limitations: e-further.

We're crazed idealists who live in the interexperience of true exploration.

— Jon Lebkowsky

stapledon

..by Don Webb

(FOR BRUCE STERLING)

Sensing a great business opportunity, he transformed his body into a recreational planet. Mainly he did this by diet and exercise. Surprisingly enough there was a series of hatha yoga exercises that turned a body into a globe. He did his initial work in a heliocentric orbit around Epsilon Eridani, but contractual problems forced him to have himself towed to Tau Ceti. This added centuries to his schedule, but the bigger you are the less time matters. He had had to go green — of course — you can't manage the animal bit at planetary size. He'd also had to have several fusion reactors sunk kilometers beneath his dermis to maintain energy levels. Most of his nervous system had been replaced by optical cable, which transmitted signals one hundred times faster than neural tissue. He used his DNA to create a race of priest/park rangers who could administer his surface. These little guys thought up many new things. They introduced submarine rides through his blood system — a number one seller to the pseudoinsects from Sirius IV, who'd been planning to upgrade to a four-chambered heart for millennia.

He found it difficult to concentrate on small problems. More and more he focused on Big Thoughts. Big Thoughts took decades (his orbit approximated Earth's) to think. While thus occupied, his priest/park rangers became involved in a Holy War. One side, the priests who ran the South Pole (Rectum) Winter Wonderland, contended that since He was everywhere at all times, He was the fastest object in the universe. The other side, who managed the Great Salt Lake (Navel), said that He never moved at all and had abandoned Himself to the Cosmic Inertia. The South won, of course, being aware of the importance of speed in warfare. But by the time the South's hypersonic jets strafed the great fortresses of the North, the planet's tourist trade had dropped to nothing.

He sensed that his cash flow had halted and summoned the Southern priests to the audience hall between His left and right brains. They came with fear and trembling for He had never summoned any of His priesthood before. He could have destroyed them — for even though he was emerging into godhood, he was still a businessman for whom the drive to profit ranked with the drives for food and sex, but he forbore and counseled them. He took a single strand of his DNA and unfolded all the information and instructed his priests where to dig for the graves of the great hack writers.

The priests revived the ancient art of rocketeering and set forth in their ramjets to Earth. Achieving a speed of $c/10$, they were able to make the round trip in just two hundred and forty years. And the priests arrived saying, "Behold, behold we have returned with the dead flesh you sent our ancestors' ancestors for six generations ago." And he said, "Thanx, guys." And the priests told him also that they had found the world barren and covered by ice. He mourned the passing of man, for he dimly remembered that he

Don Webb, a noted, ubiquitous author from Austin, Texas, has been acclaimed as "the founder of gonzo fiction." He's also been helping to support FWI from the beginning.

Multiplicity as key to our collective survival: a most appropriate metaphor for an internetworked community. Hey, Deleuze tried to state this, but went nuts...

had once been such as they (and besides, they had been good customers in the early years — visiting the brothels located in the canyons of his scrotum and losing heavily in the casinos of the desert of his chest).

The priests departed and they were tested by the Grand Hierophant of the South Pole. It was found that their theology had mutated (due to 240 years of isolation) and that their genes had drifted (due to poor shielding). Thusly, they were put to death and their screams reached even to the secret places of He.

But he was too busy to notice. In his stomach he was boiling down the flesh of dead hacks. And he snipped their DNA into simple chains such as AGGA or TCTCA.

fruit they produced trilogies and quadrologies and one vine — which had been very neglected — produced a dekology. His priests gathered these books, pruned such leaves and buds away that were

makers, and the makers of cereal. All of these came and since this was the first meeting of these two civilizations — there was a great dialectic and a flowering of culture. All true artists and philoso-

evolved and fragments of the great faith of He is found even yet among those people.

He became aware that his priesthood had left him. So he sent his awareness into the great Bohe-

"He cried. He prayed. He cursed. He shouted. And these floods of electromagnetic distress completely destroyed a small civilization entering the Television Age just sixty light years distant..."

unnecessary, and sold them to two new civilizations appearing in the constellation of Orion.

He held onto the rights of these books, and drawing upon his instincts for marketing, began to sprout theme parks on his ancient

phers came and lived in the great Bohemia of his nipples. And from the great dialectic came new philosophies, and sciences, and arts; and the intellectual growth rate of the two races became exponential.

mia, and he found there that the cutting edge artists and beat poets possessed servomechanisms cunningly crafted of metal. He breathed some of His essence into these robots and they revolted. The cutting edge artists and beat poets cleared the hell out of there, because metal will beat flesh any-time. And the robots asked themselves, "From whence cometh this free will which has never before touched our kind?" And he said, "I sent forth my essence into you that I might have companionship." And one third of the robots told him to screw off and they rocketed into space. And of these robots many great deeds were done and their legends exist among all sentient races of the seventeen galaxies known as the Local Group.

The robots who remained fashioned themselves Three Laws that they might be civilized. As the robot civilization came into being, the two races ceased to visit the recreational planet. They had matured, and their powers had grown so that should they desire planet-wide recreation they could will it into being. The great casinos and rides and amusements went to seed. Some of their fine spores drifted into his outer atmosphere and beyond on the solar winds. Some found their way to young worlds and life began there — some quickly evolved such as the intelligent Ferris-wheel peo-



He compared the chains each to each until he encountered the sequence which produces hack writing. Then he made a virus and inoculated the skin of what was once his armpits and great vines grew there. The vines bore strange

skin. Tourists came, and aspiring writers wanting to know the secrets of hackdom, and critics and sociologists, and half-baked mystics who saw in these works a reflection of their half-baked ideas, and filmmakers, and toy-

His priesthood thrived and they propounded a new doctrine — that the true function of a priesthood was its own preservation. So they split themselves among the two civilizations and departed. There they prospered and

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ple of Maga III — others only flickered into awareness at the time of the Heat Death.

The robot civilization began to directly modify him. At first he was frightened, but then he realized that since he had breathed his essence into these beings he would have to watch its unfolding. The robot civilization cultured old-fashioned neural tissue so that he had many human-sized brains at the branches of his fiber optic nerves. His intelligence and his capacity for thought were greatly increased thereby. He discovered that each of the human brains could think a portion of the Big Thoughts and by this huge expansion of co-processors his awareness was approaching the infinite. The robot race sank great wells into him. There they made huge I/O ports so that they could benefit from the outpouring of his wisdom. Secondly they could download the older members of their race directly into him. There was no more fear of becoming obsolete — all of their programs and subprograms would remain forever in his memory.

Eventually the robots were able to create the perfect computer. This computer had all of his wisdom which could be encoded in matter; all of his awareness, ditto; and all of the experiences of their race. This being set out on a voyage of experience. The robot race — having reached its self-directed end — downloaded into him. For many centuries he was silent. Transient things like watching the birth and death of species had ceased to interest him. He slowly became aware of a biological noise inside himself. He had forgotten his biological origin, having long since believed himself transcendent of such necessities. He discovered that the millennia of hatha yoga exercises had made him into an androgynous being. He was about to give birth. He tried to contact the embryonic planets

within himself, but found their minds too simple too unformed. He was unsure if he had the musculature or the pain tolerance for birth. He studied his DNA where in the record of millions of births were kept. He began to modify himself. Who knows how to birth a planet? Should he grow breasts and learn to give suck to these new worlds? He began practicing Lamaze.

The birthing took two hundred years. It was the longest two hundred years of his life. Rivers of saliva, and tears, and blood coursed over him. He cried. He prayed. He cursed. He shouted. And these floods of electromagnetic distress completely destroyed a small civilization entering the Television Age just sixty light years distant. Three of his children were born alive and began drifting through space looking for a G-type star of their very own. One was born dead. This rocky satellite revolved around its mother — raising and lowering his tides of tears.

He found that he could communicate with his offspring by rocking himself slightly. The gravity waves thus induced propagated at the speed of light. He was pleased to discover that his offspring knew how to feed themselves. They had grown huge magnetic traps not only sucking in vast amounts of energy, but tiny amounts of matter to build their bones. One of his children who had managed to find an unoccupied G-star only one hundred light years away reported that life had evolved from the coating of afterbirth. Was this anything to be concerned about? He checked and he too was supporting a variety of monocellular organisms (some of them descendants of bacterial colonies which had been on his skin since his own birth). He told his child that any planet was subject to such outbreaks, and that it was nothing to be ashamed of.

He noticed that stars were beginning to die faster than they were being replaced. Red shifts had stopped — so he put a portion of his brains on the problem of Heat Death and how to avoid it.

A great silver metal locust landed on the dead satellite. It was one of the demonrobots. After millennia it had returned to thank him for the gift essence. The demonrobots had perfected essence and individuality just as their brothers had perfected harmony and cooperation. The locust told of a million revolutions — of self-awareness blossoming like embers on a billion worlds. And when the locust had finished his speech, it poured a vial of purple liquid onto the rocky moon. The

demonrobot flew away. He turned his attention to the purple puddle on his own dead child. The product of demon science reacted with the stones. Soon they were putting forth stony blossoms and long siliceous fur. This strange beauty so entranced him that he poured all of his awareness into his midsection. Vast unblinking blue eyes grew there to watch the moon. The stones grew wings and became great stony dragons — or they grew tentacles and became

great stony octopi which snatched the dragons from the thin air. The stoneforms ran through all the possibilities of life. He could not comprehend all the multiform, but he understood that this was the demon race's gift to him. He marveled at its beauty and found its strange images more compelling than all of the downloaded robot rationality.

While he had been thus distracted life had left the bloody sea and learned to walk on six legs. They built roads between the great eyes and cities on ancient scars. They had mined him and found the brains working on the Heat Death problem. They linked their great computers to those brains — for they were very interested in Heat Death in this strange red universe of his old age. They hit upon a solution. They pried open his senile mouth and began to force feed him star stuff. They put kilometers-long neutronium supports between his teeth. He began to implode. The six-legged ones controlled his new shape while they traversed his surface in great arcs at faster and faster speeds. He became a singularity — a black hole — and the great arcs shot backward in time. The six-legged race hurtled back along his life line. They became strings of awareness extending along the whole of his being. Their presence touched at each point of decision gently bending him into the shape he took.

After the six-legged race had fled, the strange moon fell into him — spreading its endless saga throughout his event horizon. In the fullness of his awareness, he watched all things including the End of the Universe and he was content.

1/e²

inter-experiential snorkeling: feeding off the nets

..by Paco Xander Nathan

People are wired, soldered and tested to thrive as hunter-gatherers.

Put a tribe of people near a forest and let 'em starve a while — they'll hunt-gather like rabid heathens for any morsel ensnareable within reach of their minds, limbs and fangs... Put a tribe of people near an ocean and they will naturally hunt-gather anything remotely edible that slimes underwater — just as Asians, Polynesians and Mediterraneans did - or elseways move overwater to better fields-o plenty — as Scandinavians and Arabs did.

Internet is much like an ocean...

We now swim in a sea of information, community, interexperience, etc., parts of which have even begun to coagulate into munchy, bite-sized clumps of memetic kelp and digital invertebrates, e.g. digests, FTP archives, FAQ's, and email lists. There are even a few good fishing shoals emerging: gopher, archie, whois...

Take a look at the world economy, some of us are starving right now.

But this damn Internet thing is fairly cheap: costs less than most cable TV subscriptions if you do it right, i.e. use a public access Unix or somebody's well-connected BBS.

Oh, by the way... Some dislike this idea of using the Nets for commerce, calling it unethical; some even get paid reasonably high salaries in Internet-related jobs to remind other people that commercial use might not be proper and pure. Frankly, I'll wager more than a few clams that even amoebas had their own version of Puritans, fervently ranting how immoral it'd be to organize into multi-cellular creatures. Then again, Puritans don't exactly enjoy a nif-f-f-ty track record in the Moral Dept.

So here we sit, a motley bunch of starving, hunting-gathering primates, perched on a border — on the interface: the Fringes — of a vast informational sea with precious little to stop us from sticking our toshies into the suds... Guess what happens next?

1/e²

cruzin' the internet

..by Scotto

Someone marginally famous once said, "Cyberspace is where you are when you're talking on the telephone." With the advent of cordless phones, this would mean that cyberspace is in my bathtub most of the time. I doubt this is what a certain science fiction author had in mind when he wrote what is popularly considered to be the first cyberpunk novel, and included within that novel the notion of a "Matrix" which one could "jack into" and proceed to wreak havoc amongst the evil corporate databases of the world.

Cyberspace — the word's already become a cliché, at least among self-professed computer geeks across the globe, and I suppose the term does function quite well as a signifier for an abstraction of some kind of vagary or another. But let's not kid ourselves, O we of a higher, paperless ideology: the lawn-mower man still mows

bly tremendous number of computers and networks, a hangout for working professionals desperately seeking to further human knowledge, college kids with a modem and a keg, self-proclaimed PROPHETS who encourage UN-ALTERED reproduction of their IMPORTANT pseudo-intellectual blatherings, eccentric net.personalities whose very existence offline is in some sincere kind of doubt, cyber-thises and cyber-thats who Know It All and can't stand having to explain the concept of "grepping" one more time, and theorists and philosophers who fully expect the Internet to sprout wings and take over the planet.

Celebrities of various stripes hang out on the Internet, and some of them even occasionally answer their email. One of Bill Clinton's flunkies has an account on CompuServe (alternately called "Compu\$pend" by Those In The Know), and soon the White House

sionally hang out on the Internet, although it seems you're more likely to receive fake mail from him than genuine mail. In Gibson's *Neuromancer*, the Matrix, a highly advanced virtual version of the Internet, attains a kind of sentience. This is not so far-fetched, according to some of the Internet theorists I know. While the hardcore hackers and crackers and cybergeeks seem to truly resent the attention *Time* magazine and others pay their subculture, the Internet theorists I know say they welcome the influx of so-called "mainstreamers" into the "memetically rich" environment of the Internet.

Soon enough, these net.philosophers predict, as human civilization itself advances faster than it itself can keep track of, plunging toward a surreal kind of temporal attractor, **more and more people will need the Internet as a kind of safety net between consensus reality and the screaming abyss**, and soon, with visual, aural, and

total sensorial stimuli overwhelming and assaulting them on every level, these people

"...in a community based on nothing but language, the most potent — and the most ATTRACTIVE — ideas will be the ones to survive..."

lawns the last time I checked, teledildonics is still just a glimmer in someone's crotch, and the closest thing we currently have to the Matrix was, in fact, originally begun by — gasp — the US Department of Defense.

Yes, friends, I'm speaking of the Internet, a motley assortment of an indeterminate and apprecia-

itself will have full Internet access, giving your country's leaders still one more medium in which to ignore you. Heck, Al Gore wrote the introduction to that "Internet for Kindergartners" book that just came out, although I sincerely doubt the Gore family gets, say, the alt.groups.

Furthermore, that cagey William Gibson himself is said to occa-

will lose what stability they have, each human brain functioning as an individual neuron within a much larger Net—the Gaian overmind will finally have discovered its voice, and at last we will, as a planet, be equipped to communicate with the larger universal community, should there be such a thing. And we'll have Gibson to blame for planting this meme within popular culture.

FRINGE WARE REVIEW

Ken Kesey and The Merry Pranksters once had a Magic Bus, widely known for exploration of the Fringes... Pranksters age, move into other realms, but the Bus has cruized onward — now it's on the Internet, oft sighted in a "place" known as LERILand, i.e. an Internet phenomenon called the LERI-L Metaprogramming List, co-founded by a wondrous character named Scotto.

The diagram illustrates a bidirectional communication system between a LOCAL (INITIATING) MODEM and a REMOTE MODEM. The LOCAL MODEM contains a TRANSMITTER and a RECEIVER. The REMOTE MODEM contains a RECEIVER and a TRANSMITTER. The system is connected via a central line with two directions of flow, indicated by arrows labeled 1 and 2. The LOCAL MODEM's TRANSMITTER is connected to the central line via a PAMP (Preamplifier). The REMOTE MODEM's RECEIVER is connected to the central line via a PAMP. The LOCAL MODEM's RECEIVER is connected to the central line via a PAMP. The REMOTE MODEM's TRANSMITTER is connected to the central line via a PAMP. The central line is connected to a DATA TERMINAL (REMOTE) which has DATA and CLOCK inputs/outputs.

...were testing it in loopback with Digital Bilateral Loop Enabled at the Remote Site.

good time.

Scotto, Leri-L Admir



TYPE OF FUNCTION: CONNECTION FUNCTION

PURPOSE: This function will begin communications, using the current value of @MODE. If @MODE=0, the system is set up for auto answer. If @MODE=1, the current number shown in @PHONE will be dialed. If @MODE=2, it is assumed there is a direct connection (i.e. not through a modem). This function is used in a SCRIPT file. It cannot be used until the SELECT function has been used, nor can it be used in an action file.

```

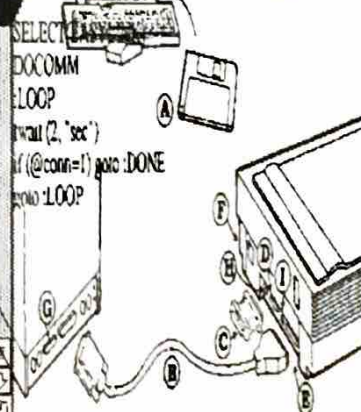
1  @ = @1
2  @ = @2
3  @ = @3
4  @ = @4
5  @ = @5
6  @ = @6
7  @ = @7
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```

0	17	Apr 24	free agent rez	(28)	
0	18	Apr 24	Murali	(33)	plate 'o shrimp
0	21	Apr 24	bienfang	(45)	RE Exploding Frog Blinds Man!
0	24	Apr 24	Richard Raby	(57)	Re plate 'o shrimp
0	25	Apr 24	Richard Raby	(37)	SOUL
0	29	Apr 24	Julie Ann Sitz	(138)	rant, spew, who really knows what to
0	33	Apr 24	Barbara Hall	(36)	our pal dave
0	34	Apr 24	Barbara Hall	(273)	brilliant new theories to be read wh
0	35	Apr 24	Rachel Frances Bos	(25)	jesus/elvis
0	37	Apr 24	Mike McCabe	(27)	Re rant, spew, who really knows what
0	38	Apr 23	Bill Eichman	(195)	utopian psychology
0	41	Apr 25	Bill Eichman	(109)	Confessio & Ressurrection- Raby
0		Apr 25	Jenea Boshart	(23)	Happy Post (short version)
0		Apr 25	Jenea Boshart	(276)	Happy Post (long version)
0		Apr 25	CONCEPCION@BASON	(46)	Re rant, spew, who really knows what

14:21 24x81 64k 19200 N81

```
SELECT * FROM ...  
DOCOMM  
:LOOP  
wait (2, "sec")  
if (@conn=1) goto :DONE  
goto :LOOP
```



On the other side of the cybernetic coin, there's the harsh realism of what actually occurs on the Internet. Someone almost as famous as Gibson once said something to the effect of "Usenet news is crap." When joining a mailing list, the important question is always, "What's the signal to noise ratio," and nine times out of ten, expect to be disappointed. God be with you if you happen to be a female roaming the corridors of banality on IRC. And I wonder what the statistics are concerning college dropouts whose souls have been lost in one MUD or another.

"Usenet is crap" — repeat that to yourself like a mantra for awhile, and maybe someday it won't bother you so much. Better yet, start a newsgroup called alt.crap (it'll go right in between alt.cramps and alt.crayfishing) and examine ALL angles of the problem. The reason

Usenet news tends to be full of crap is that damn near anyone can start a newsgroup. That's right, any dunderhead with at least the ability to read monosyllabic words can figure it out, and it doesn't even take that to actually post to a newsgroup. Think of the implications: nobody just runs off and starts newspapers, or publishes books, or develops television shows (I mean, imagine the world we'd live in, I shudder to think), not with the potential audience of an Internet connection. Let's face it: some of us will read damn near anything. Have you checked out alt.mcdonalds lately? They don't have flame wars there, they have flameBROIL wars. I have a friend of a friend whose third cousin on his step-grandfather's side who once accidentally wandered across a group called — gasp — alt.drugs. Can you imagine?

A subset of this form of communication is the mailing list. These discussion groups are email based, generally have substantially smaller audiences, and consider it their duty to stay On Topic in ways the average newsgroup can't. On the mailing lists I've been a part of, the regular posters begin to feel like a community of sorts, perhaps even a family, like a little electronic sitcom where everyone is the annoying neighbor. For real mailing list fun, check out the Extropians, a gang of well-meaning futurists who intend to survive the entropic heat death of the universe. Or maybe you'd prefer my old hangout, Leri-L, a crazy collection of would-be teleogians who expect to figure out the major problems of consciousness theory in between writing poetry and having the occasional Mystical Experience™.

And then there's IRC — Internet Relay Chat — which is for people who find that email is simply too slow to satisfy their urges to say what amounts to basically nothing at all, only faster. The hit IRC channels tend to be #hottub and #hotsex. The intelligentsia on IRC, strangely enough, seem to be referred to as 'bots. Yet even here, our friends from the Fringe have made incursions. On #cIRcLe, an electronic version of Plato's academy, the premise is that intense, over-the-top stream of consciousness mindspews will help shape the way we think, so as to prepare us for our eventual foray into the Singularity (popularly referred to as Orgasm 2012 by those with a sense of humor).

How can this motley assortment of interconnected media ever transform the way the planet thinks about itself? Well, my friends, I'm sure I don't need to tell you that there's an art to Cruzin' the Internet, that there are connections to be made and deep dark catacombs of communication to be visited. The potential exists for

mindboggling Something-Or-Other, and it is we, the inhabitants of the Fringe, who must be the surveyors of a new cybernetic landscape (how's that for poetry?).

Cruzin' the Internet will show you the pinnacles of the Fringe, take you to unexpected depths and around the most unusual corners. We will find ways to dive head first into the meme pool, to shape our virtual hangout so that "crap" is no longer an issue. After all, what's crap to the goose is brilliant insight to the gander, or so the story goes. Stay tuned — I don't want to have to say this stuff twice.

It does us no good to resent the attention of the "mainstream." Rather, we should welcome them with open e-arms, into a world that we ourselves have fashioned, a decentralized informational society (yeehah!) where the Fringe itself (and I'm sure I don't need to define "Fringe" for y'all by now) becomes the mainstream, and the revolutionized mainstream now allows us the freedom for even further Fringe explorations. Sure, I know, I know, it's nothing but well-crafted rhetoric at this point, but as my memeticist pals will tell you, in a community based on nothing but language, the most potent — and the most ATTRACTIVE — ideas will be the ones to survive. Those ideas may as well include some of ours, wouldn't you agree?

Next time: Cruzin' the Internet takes an in-depth look at the Fringes of Usenet news. Also available in explicit GIF format. [Ed's note: "Internet for Kindergartners" is also known as The Internet Companion by another good friend of ours, Tracy LaQuey — an excellent intro text even for people who feel apprehensive near unplugged modems.]

1/e²

as if productions

asif@well.sf.ca.us

tutorial: email lists

..by **Paco Xander Nathan**

A sampler of Fringeful email lists (aside from FringeWare): subscript addresses and anonymous FTP sites (if any) are listed; you can hunt/gather specifics from list themselves...

Aleph
aleph-request@pyramid.com
slopoke.mlb.semi.harris.com:
/pub/Incoming/Aleph

Discussion of applied memetics (study of meme transmission) and singularity theory, including *Time-wave Zero*, along with a practical exercise, by Oz's leading subversive Mitchell Porter. *Moderate traffic, about 10 msg/day.*

Autopia
autopia-request@wixer.bga.com

Building a not-so-Temporary Autonomous Zone out of an old tanker retrofitted with the latest DIY tech, to create a mobile c-punk country. *Light traffic.*

Cypherpunks
cypherpunks-request@toad.com
soda.berkeley.edu:
/pub/cypherpunks

Electronic privacy, PGP and other encryption tools, anonymous remailers, digital cash, TEMPEST shielding, group software projects, political action. *Moderate traffic, around 10-50 msg/day, depending on what the nifty people in Washington DC have been up to.*

Extropians
extropians-request@gnu.ai.mit.edu
lynx.cs.wisc.edu:
/pub/Ext-Essay

"For sharing libertarian, free-market, life-extensionist and other Extropian ideas with bright, like-minded individuals around the globe." *Traffic is called "lively", i.e. expect hundreds of msg/day.*

Future Culture
future-request@nyx.cs.du.edu

New Edge culture in general, more timely news reporting than CNN, etc. A great FAQ compiled by founder Andy Hawks. *Moderate traffic, generally under 10 msg/day. (now offline, but rumored to be reviving; look for the FAQ.)*

Intelligent House
intelhouse-request@dlb.com

Turn your cottage into a "smart home" with (1) your desktop computer and (2) some simple, inexpensive devices such as X-10. Great advice from practitioners. *Low traffic, around 5 msg/day.*

Glove-List
listserv@boxer.nas.nasa.gov

Discussion of the Nintendo *PowerGlove* and related devices for low-cost Virtual Reality input. *Light traffic, about 5-10 msg/day.*

Leri-L
leri-request@pyramid.com
penguin.gatech.edu:
/pub/leri

Meta-programming, philosophy, expanding consciousness, etc. Online community and unparaphable chatter blended with some beautiful jewels of human expression. *Reasonably heavy traffic, clocked at 30-100 msg/day.*

Mind Machine Digest
mind-l-request@asylum.sf.ca.us
asylum.sf.ca.us:
/pub/mind-l

Use, construction and future potential of mind machines... meditation, accelerated learning, hypnosis, float tanks, nootropics, etc. *Light traffic, generally only a few msg/day.*

REND386
rend386-request@sunee.uwaterloo.ca
sunee.uwaterloo.ca:
/pub/rend386

Discussion of *REND386* software and related hardware for great,

low-cost, DOS-based Virtual Reality tools. *Reasonably light traffic.*

Robot-Board
listserv@oberon.com

Discussion of robot controller boards, and robot control in general. Formed to support the Mini-board 2.0 and 6.270 board design by Fred Martin and Randy Sargent of MIT. *Moderate traffic, around 10 msg/day and an excellent place to find scarce electronics parts.*

Technomads
technomads-request@bikelab.corp.sun.com

"Reports from the field" by the quintessential technomad Steve Roberts of *Nomadic Research Labs*, combined with great discussion by other inventors working on truly mobile computing platforms. *Light traffic — occasional, with great info on where to find parts.*

How To FLOOD Your INBOX...

There are really two flavors of lists around, *LISTSERV* and *Unix*. Electronic mailing sprang from the *LISTSERV* software on BITNET sites (mostly on university mainframes) so these account for the more established (and/or more quickly installed) lists. To subscribe to a *LISTSERV* list, send a message using the following convention:

To: listserv@host
subscribe <list> <name>

So to join the *Glove-List*, a fringoid named Jane Smith would send the following message:

To:
listserv@boxer.nas.nasa.gov
subscribe *Glove-List*
Jane Smith

Email lists based on *Unix* systems are less picky, but also less consistent and generally less reliable — that'll change as *Unix* lists take over the planet. To join one of

these, just send the list request address a message... To join *Autopia*, send:

To: autopia-request@wixer.bga.com
subscribe

VOLUME = MASS * ACCELERATION

Many email list bytes spawn from schools, so the ebb and flow of list traffic and membership swells and withers with the academic year.

Most email lists run *unmoderated* in *reflector* mode, i.e. whatever gets sent to the list address gets rebroadcast to *everyone* on the list. If a list's software isn't written well, every mail error message bounces to the entire list...

Moderated lists have a human reading each message before it ever goes to subscribers. Some lists are *digested*, so that you only get periodic (daily, weekly, monthly) mailings of accumulated messages. Many lists provide FAQ's for *Frequently Asked Questions*. These files/jewels distill the common wisdom of a list's focus area. Check 'em out.

Caveat subscriber: if you pay online fees per message, take care that you don't sign up to a high volume list unless you're eager to spend lots-o money!

1/e²



cypherpunk: "90's make the 60's look like the 50's"

..by **Paco Xander Nathan**

A side-street kosher deli in Berkeley - Autumn '92. I sat across the table from St. Jude and Eric Hughes, staring incredulously after what I'd just heard. For two days, a gang of digital hoodlums from Ono-Sendai Corporation had been priming me about a certain Mr. Hughes and his "secret" plans. For over two months, Jude had been doing the same. Primed and readied for shock, Eric spilled his guts on me by unveiling a conceptual architecture for the "Cypherpunk Movement" - *crypto-anarchy*.

One part "cypher" - an esoteric branch of modern algebra where theoretical mathematics meets computational practice - and one part "punk", i.e. *spontaneous community rising out of intentional anarchy and raw emotional reaction*, which maybe explains why these two later invited me down to the local Dickies show and stomped blood out of my toes.

From my social/academic background, this hybrid of "punk mathematrix" approaches perfect beauty, albeit within a strange twist. People talk of how the 1990's are 'sposed to parallel the 1960's in terms of wild revolution: twenty eight years prior a band of Berkeley activists shook the US out of its June Cleaver cultural trance by launching the Free Speech Movement. Now another band of Berkeley activists prepares to shake the planet out of its big-government, big-business cultural/economic trance by launching the Cypherpunk Movement. Both groups sought out the most vibrant arenas for human discourse, of their respective times, as sites for their demonstration: then, on prestigious university campuses; now, in cyberspace.

The Cypherpunk concept is amazingly simple, conceptually elegant to the point that only trained mathematicians would have patience and marathon attention spans enough to recognize and develop its potential. You've heard of Big Brother? You've heard of how plans are only as good as their weakest link? Twist it - inside out... Here's a way for

the compilation is "...devoted to the exploration of cryptology and digital privacy and to the application of modern cryptology, including public key encryption, untraceable electronic mail, digital money, and DC nets." I'd love to reprint the entire text, but there's no need - just follow-up the references listed, especially the brilliant article "Protecting Privacy with Electronic Cash" by Eric's buddy Hal Finney in *Extropy* #10 [*Extropy Institute*, PO Box 57306, Los Angeles, CA 90057-0306, +1 213 484 6383, more@usc.edu, ISSN: 1057-1035], which explains the mechanics of Cypherpunk tools in detail. No pipe bombs required - just a few enabling programs, both digital and social.

#1: Suppose you had a kind of encryption tool that allowed you to encode documents so that only the intended reader could decode it, so that not even a national government or megacorp could break into your comm. Suppose you could use this tool to sign documents and verify signatures from other people. Stop speculating and go grab a copy of PGP off the Net. Then start trading public keys with your friends... *Hurry!*

#2: Suppose you could send electronic mail messages anonymously. Suppose you could even include an anonymous "Self Addressed Stamped Envelope" to a stranger for a secure reply. Again, stop wondering because these mechanisms already exist. *New public anonymous remailers are coming online every week.*

#3: Suppose people were willing to accept data transfer as a valid form of legal tender. *Thanks to VISA, Ross Perot's EDT, the Fed Reserve, etc., this is pretty much old hat.*

Eric's big eye-opener for me was first how well these three suppositions *had already happened*, and second how well they'd fit together to demand change in society, a kind of change that was self-determined. By proliferating PGP use among the more informed people on the Net, and by authoring public domain source code that almost anybody with a Unix account or BBS could use to create an anonymous remailer, Eric & co. had launched a mathematically self-consistent meme.

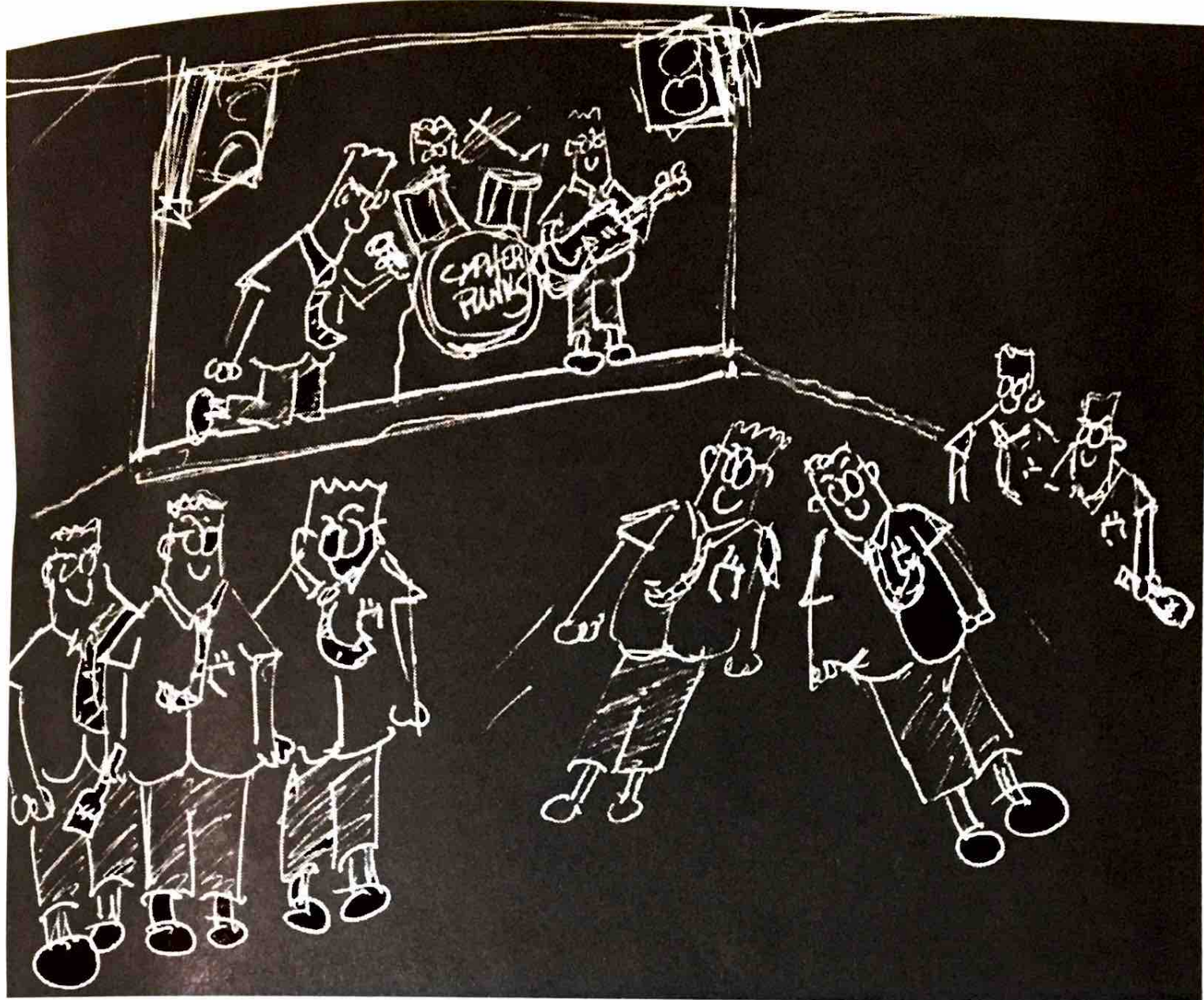
Check with Hal Finney's article for examples, but given #1 and #2, we pretty much have a

means for exchanging data without Big Brother being able to track it. Go over the mathematics elsewhere, but it works - that's probably why the FBI and several other acronyms are *struggling so damn hard* to emasculate ALL forms of digital encryption with government-only "backdoor" entry - because without self-imposed brain damage within the crypto-

"Our secrets become who we are inside..."

anybody who can type to use their PC to foil Big Brother, and at the same time enable social ties which are only as good as their *strongest* link. Sound absurd?

Eric reached over the pickle jar and stuck a set of documents in my hand entitled: *Introduction to Modern Cryptology*. The cover page explains how



anarchy community, the more fascist wings of big government are, in a word, *Fucked*.

YOU'VE GOTTA ENCRYPT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO PARTY

Here's the crux... Supposed you and I both use a public key encryption system like PGP. We both have generated our own sets of key pairs, and publish our public keys. Put 'em in the ".plan" files online for remote "fingering" so that people can use Internet like a global telephone book. Okay, I may not know you, but say I've

got something important to send you, something that NO ONE else should really even see... I take the file, sign it with my key, encrypt the whole thing using your public key, then send it to you. You get the encrypted file in an email message, you use your private key to decrypt it. Then you've got my message with a digital signature which you can verify using my public key.

Now suppose that you and I have information so important that we don't even want anybody to know we've been talking. For example,

say I'm a whistle-blower inside Enterprising Textiles Inc. who wants to let you, a journalist, know how management has been ignoring high asbestos levels in a children's clothing line. It probably wouldn't be a good idea for anybody, even you, to trace my identity. So I encrypt my tip-off using your public key, then send it to you through a remailer. The remailer strips off all my identification and you receive the message anonymously, say from "nobody@remail.dis.org".

Of course, I've gotta place my faith and trust in the person running the remailer, that they aren't keeping a log to trace our mail. No problem, since remailers can have public keys too. I can chain remailers to reach you after several "hops": each hop is encrypted with that remailer's public key. I don't care if ALL the remailer operators read our mail, they won't have your private key - *unless you're part of some bizarre world conspiracy and in that case we've got even better things to get paranoid about...* But as long as at least ONE of the hops

fails to maintain a log, then the whole transaction stays anonymous. Of course, my OWN remailer might be included in one of the hops, wink wink... I could even get fancy and encrypt my return address using a particular remailer's public key, and thereby supply you with my SASE.

DISNEY DOLLARS' DIASPORA

Eric spilled these arguments all over our toast-ed reubens and I could follow the logic, but to what end? How about *international commerce*, private from any government. By adding social consequences of #3 to mechanisms of #1 and #2, we've got money! Eric apprenticed under a guy named David Chaum, who's major work has been to prove the concept of "digital cash". Dollar bills are nothing more than secured documents: *anonymous*, *interchangeable*, secured documents. "I don't care where you got your sawbuck from, so long as it's real and will help buy my groceries." Whereas credit card services and banks effectively use electronic mail messages and encryption to *reduce* individuals' privacy, digital cash enables individuals' privacy. Consider the anon-

ymous, encrypted mail strategy you and I used to subvert ETI above... Throw in another third party to help mediate our transactions, i.e. a *digital cash bank*, and we could just as well have been trading money instead of information. Again, check Finney's article for an excellent report, and/or subscribe to the Cypherpunks email list.

If one really can trade data and payment anonymously with other people in cyberspace, then it would be pretty damn difficult for any physical government to exact a tax or impose a censorship in many cases. Face it, one *could* generate and use *several* multiple, untraceable personalities online - so long as one remembered his private key used for each. In fact, private keys ultimately become the ONLY basis for identity. Our secrets become who we are inside.

NATURE OF ALBATROSS BLOOD

The only way to stop the crypto-anarchists, at this point, would be to cut ALL their communication lines: to pull down the entire Internet worldwide, along with all zamizdat computer networking, e.g. the FidoNet BBS chain that currently links most of Eastern Europe, Asia and the Third World. The Net these days stretches out to satellites and NASA's Space Shuttle. Most all other forms of telecommunications and electronic broadcast media, i.e. radio and television, would have to be suspended as well. *I don't think that will happen.* Violence against the source of privacy - raiding/seizing specific computer sites, like the pitiful excuse for government action that happened at the ill-fated Steve Jackson Games raid by the US Secret Service - would be pointless, because computer processes can be run remotely and distributed across multiple systems, scattered throughout cyberspace.

Can't help but recall that Berkeley's FSM rode a psychic crest of public reaction precipitated by JFK's assassination, i.e. the censorship of a nation's conscience. I can't help but note that Berkeley's Cypherpunk Movement (at least spawned there, but now global in practice) arises after a swell of rampant fascism: Tienmen Square, Secret Service raids, the alleged New World Order, etc. Whereas the Berkeley Free Speech Movement launched via the force of Human Will by the thousands marching in the streets and inevitably met with tanks and tear gas, Cypherpunks have launched via the force of a relatively few, well-honed minds

sprinkled about the planet and blended with the power of ever-evolving computers.

So far, the tanks and tear gas facing Cypherpunks are, in a word, *ephemeral*. Bad enough, considering that their chief opponents were responsible for the Cold War... Within the first 100 days of the Clinton Administration in Washington, White House officials unveiled a Fed project involving AT&T, NSA/FBI, and a supersecret high-tech (NSA front) firm called Mycotronx... The project, labeled *Clipper* - aka *Tapper* - would/will/might produce a federally-approved, industry standard encryption chip, complete with "backdoor" hooks for Fed snooping on private comm. Meanwhile the Cypherpunks howl, and Silicon Valley suits & pols cry "foul", but even *this* Federal hack against private encryption is but another mere *legislative/technological* joust at an intrinsically *social/mathematical* issue, i.e. *unenforceable trickery with no soul*. Sadly, even the chip's name presents a trademark violation.

GIVE IT A 10 - CAN DEFINITELY DANCE TO IT

I stood awash in a sea of slamming and stage diving, my heart pounding amidst the ebb and flow of a club floor. Nothing new about this at all... Pull the pretense of "authority" out of a group of humans then mix in some music, a bit of psycho-sexual tension/ambiguity, and maybe a psychoactive substance - primarily alcohol in this case. People will stake their turf, smile/threaten/ignore/grab each other and basically enjoy their own versions of the dance; in essence they spawn a beautiful, raw form of community which takes on a life itself. A parallel happens in almost any online forum. Open a BBS conference, a newsgroup, a mailing list and the spontaneous activity among "strangers" - rants, flames, grins, turf - resembles a club floor in every way except the exchange of smoke and sweat. Which is why the "cyberpunk" lit authors were such astute commentators on what would happen given a broad mix of people and computers over time.

'Tis refreshing to see a successful group of self-styled anarchists who've tossed their pipe bombs in favor of algebra, complexity and multiplicity. Co-mingling high concepts out of advanced mathematics with the basis of raw human nature, and nurturing them to rove freely about the planet... is that what the Cypherpunk m(ov)eme(nt) is all about?

1/e²

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tutorial: pgp

..by Paco Xander Nathan

These examples were based on PGP version 2.2, run on a Macintosh in Turkistan. They would look textually similar on just about any other system, at least until system-specific graphical interfaces evolve. We use fictitious names, keys, addresses and remailer sites, just because. This tutorial is provided for educational purposes only, and not intended to breach the patents of PKP, RSA, NSA, M2K, etc., since PGP can actually use algorithms other than RSA... FWI assumes no liability just because you read this and reach digital satori about your privacy.

First off, we'll generate a key pair for an imaginary friend of ours named Joe Washington Brown, who has an email address at work in the Pantex Fortune Cookie Company. Afterwards, Joe will be able to send secure data messages across unsecure channels (like Internet) which would give even the Feds—with all their Star Wars approved gopod-awesome supercomputers—a bad hair day if they tried to decipher... Do not worry, this is easy!

pgp -kg

Pick your RSA key size:

- 1) 384 bits- Casual grade, fast but less secure
- 2) 512 bits- Commercial grade, medium speed, good security
- 3) 1024 bits- Military grade, very slow, highest security

Choose 1, 2, or 3, or enter desired number of bits: 2

Generating an RSA key with a 512-bit modulus...

You need a user ID for your public key. The desired form for this user ID is your name, followed by your E-mail address enclosed in <angle brackets>, if you have an E-mail address. For example: John Q. Smith <12345.6789@compuserve.com>

Enter a user ID for your public key:

Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>

You need a pass phrase to protect your RSA secret key. Your pass phrase can be any sentence or phrase and may have many words, spaces, punctuation, or any other printable characters.

Enter pass phrase: No Free Will - No Free World

Note that key generation is a VERY lengthy process.
Key generation completed.

Ah, now that feels better. Joe now has a public/private key pair generated within PGP. He even decides to take a look at the ASCII text version of his key, just for shits and giggles...

pgp -kxa "Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>"
"pubring.pgp"

Extracting from key ring: 'pubring.pgp', userid "Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>".

Key for user ID: Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>
508-bit key, Key ID 7B5AA1, created 1993/02/05

Key extracted to file 'joekey.asc'.

—BEGIN PGP PUBLIC KEY BLOCK—

Version: 2.2

mQBPAivfu98AAAEb/AkbUoiRRToRSJAViZcEXgenLFGI+2JLt1
b24gQn24qPG51dXRyb24yM0Bjb29raWUucGFudGV4LmNvbQ==
=x8KF

—END PGP PUBLIC KEY BLOCK—

Next, Joe would like to send a friendly, yet private message to his good friends at FringeWare Inc., telling them about his new job and all the wonderful opportunities at Pantex for working in the nuclear weapons industry. To do this, Joe must get FringeWare's public key, which he extracts from an FWI email message and adds to his public key ring...

pgp -ka "fwreadme.msg" "pubring.pgp"

Looking for new keys...

pub 512/80DDA1 1993/02/05 FWI <whistle@fringe.com>

Checking signatures... Keyfile contains:

1 new key(s)

One or more of the new keys are not fully certified.
Do you want to certify any of these keys yourself (y/N)? y

Key for user ID: FWI <whistle@fringe.com> 512-bit

key, Key ID 80DDA1, created 1993/02/05 Key

fingerprint = B8 57 1E 99 B8 74 4A 30 40 D6 DD 8B 89

A5 D9 DC This key/userID association is not

certified. Do you want to certify this key yourself (y/N)? y

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and
Fourth Annual Fall of the Government Party

Pretty Good Privacy -- Version 2.0

PGP

Looking for key for user 'FWI <whistle@fringe.com>':
Key for user ID: FWI <whistle@fringe.com> 512-bit
key, Key ID 80DDA1, created 1993/02/05

READ CAREFULLY: Based on your own direct first-hand
knowledge, are you absolutely certain that you are
prepared to solemnly certify that the above public
key actually belongs to the user specified by the
above user ID (y/N)? y

You need a pass phrase to unlock your RSA secret key.
Key for user ID "Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>"
Enter pass phrase: **No Free Will = No Free World**

Pass phrase is good. Just a moment... Key signature
certificate added.

The public key for FWI has been added to Joe's public key ring, and Joe agrees
to certify its authenticity. He even gets to use his private key to verify his own
identity in the transaction. Next, Joe composes his plain text message for FWI,
in a file called "hello.msg"...

I'm really uncertain about that last group of neutron
bombs. Why is there a bunch of writing in chalk???

Then Joe uses PGP to sign and encrypt the message based on his private key
(signing) and FWI's public key (encrypting)...

pgp -seat "hello.msg" "FWI <whistle@fringe.com>"
A secret key is required to make a signature. You
need a pass phrase to unlock your RSA secret key. Key
for user ID "Joe W. Brown <cookie@pantex.com>"

Enter pass phrase: **No Free Will = No Free World**

Pass phrase is good. Key for user ID: Joe W. Brown
<cookie@pantex.com> 508-bit key, Key ID 7B5AA1,
created 1993/02/05 Just a moment... Recipients'
public key(s) will be used to encrypt. Key for user
ID: FWI <whistle@fringe.com> 512-bit key, Key ID
80DDA1, created 1993/02/05

—BEGIN PGP MESSAGE—
Version: 2.2
—END PGP MESSAGE—

Transport armor file: hello.asc
—BEGIN PGP MESSAGE—
Version: 2.2

hEwCxXtSQ/eA3aEBAf0QVw8tjlm6H+7/mFeVnymVSWcU
3APhU/mwKuNzirh+BYiSHvirnPnNf+ETThSjKeSaxkH5ys7R
AAAUT+x8VtC3PAo0XVUo/9mzWmJYuliuV/MRkG2ORxAm
+haPbmyR+2cZyW1Vwh2Dr338ohA7DSCyWzdqVUtUY+QXJ
ItQrW4MuDjFgy6xSRacB0fvtntyBnxsI7TtDPiUQjUb9xUNQ=
=kLst

—END PGP MESSAGE—

Joe has an encrypted, signed message ready to send to FWI. He sends the
message, via an anonymous remailer... Yeh, that's right, since Joe knows a
special address that will forward his mail anonymously, he only has to add two
lines at the top of his message, the "::" and the "Request..." followed by a blank
line...

mail hfishy@clamshell.portal.com
::
Request-Remailing-To: whistle@fringe.com

-r hello.asc

The remailer kindly receives Joe's message, strips off any identifying informa-
tion and forwards the rest to FWI, as requested. FWI receives this, and notices
the PGP encryption. FWI now wants to decrypt Joe's message, so it uses its
private key...

pgp "hello.asc" -o "hello.msg"
File is encrypted. Secret key is required to read
it. Key for user ID: FWI <whistle@fringe.com> 512-bit
key, Key ID 80DDA1, created 1993/02/05
You need a pass phrase to unlock your RSA secret key.

Enter pass phrase: **when u pry my c0ld dead fngrz**

Pass phrase is good. Just a moment...

Plaintext filename: hello.msg
—BEGIN PGP SIGNED MESSAGE—
I'm really uncertain about that last group of neutron
bombs. Why is there a bunch of writing in chalk???

—BEGIN PGP SIGNATURE—
Version: 2.2

iQBVAgUBK99fXpalDlQeelqhAQHqQQH7Bxrc68Pyhb9LSUJ
+LlqVDavu8fNw==
=09q+
—END PGP SIGNATURE—

Message is in plain text and the signature is encrypted. Great, we can read what
Joe wanted us to see, but let's check message signature to make sure that Joe
actually wrote this message. So FWI uses its private key again...

pgp "hello.msg" -o "hello.chk"
File has signature. Public key is required to check
signature. Good signature from user "Joe W. Brown
<cookie@pantex.com>".
Signature made 1993/02/05 04:54 GMT

Plaintext filename: hello.chk
I'm really uncertain about that last group of neutron
bombs. Why is there a bunch of writing in chalk???

See, it's really pretty easy to use PGP to encrypt, sign and decrypt messages.
You can use PGP, and tools similar to it, for even more useful goodies, so check
'em out... As of press time, a dozen known anonymous remailers exist
throughout Internet. However, Net "authorities" have seen fit lately to "dis-
courage" remailer use and/or proliferation. Information about remailers is
readily available: get on the Net to find out more!

1/e²

FRINGE WARE REVIEW

tom jennings

..by Jon Lebkowsky

Tom: This people tracking stuff... what little I know of it sounds very creepy. I don't want a box that reports where the hell I am all the time, when I walk in the room, it can tell some local machine I'm there. It's none of anyone's goddamn business. It's the corporate culture invasion on real life, like the top 1% who make all the money, and think everyone's gonna live like them.

Jon: Well, if you're living in an ivory tower, after you live there for a while, you start to think, not that it's YOUR environment, but it's THE environment.

T: Yeah, it is reality, but it's a local one. Everyone they know is like that... well, they don't know everybody.

J: In a conversation I had the other day with Allucquere Rosanne Stone, she talked about *ubiquitous computing*, that computers or computing will be invisible, it will be so omnipresent...

T: That's what Alan Kay pointed out years ago, that when technology gets done right, you don't even see it. When you walk in a room, your hand flicks a switch... how much thought do you give to that stupid light switch? Hopefully very little. The light comes on, and... Telephones are getting close to that.

J: Even better, there's some rooms you walk into and the light switches on automatically, because there's motion detectors.

T: Yeah.

ANARCHY IN THE A-C-K

J: Tell me about FidoNet. As I said, I'm sorta ignorant on the subject...

T: I have a weird point of view on it, of course, having designed it...

February or March of '94 will be it's tenth year. It is a network, a collection of bulletin boards. It is a loose confederation, and it is completely and thoroughly and utterly decentralized. There is literally no top. Most of it's members have a narrow view of it because they have this particular reality filter on all the time from living amongst hierarchy addicts. But FidoNet's most basic element is a bulletin board. What FidoNet is, is a set of protocols that lets the bulletin boards communicate. FidoNet started as a bunch of bulletin boards, running my Fido software. FidoNet was added later, to allow point-to-point email between Fido boards.

J: Did you start with just a single BBS?

T: It started with my system. I was writing software for Phoenix Software, which is now Phoenix Technologies. I was their first employee. I did all their portable MS-DOS stuff prior to the ROM BIOS they did, which was partly based on my previous work with "portable" MS-DOS... we were doing MS-DOS installations in three days, and charging exorbitant sums... and delivering really good stuff, people got their money's worth, and got it damn fast! We had it down to an art of just totally portable stuff. So I had this portable attitude toward hardware, and wrote a bulletin board sort of based on it.

FidoNet is more importantly a social mechanism. It was pretty obvious from the start that it was going to be a social monster, almost more so than a technical thing. And it had to do with the original environment of bulletin boards, which were around for quite a while by the time I got around to doing Fido. Every bulletin board was completely different, run by some cantankerous person who ran their board the way that they saw fit, period. So FidoNet had to fit in that environment.

J: A very anarchic environment.

T: Yes, explicitly anarchic. Most people just ran them for their own reasons, and they were just separated by large distances of time and space, so they remained locally oriented. I just ran across old interviews and old documentation from '83 - '84, and we were saying it then. It was just... people didn't hear it, it just went in one ear and out the other. They think 'Oh, anarchism, that means throwing rocks at the cops!' Well sometimes, I suppose, but that's mostly a cop's definition of it.

THE REVOLUTION WILL BE PACKETIZED

J: The sense of the bomb throwing anarchist, I guess, is sort of in the sense of political disorder...

T: ...which was a specific event in the 20's in San Francisco having to do with union labor busts. And blackmail... this guy Tom Mooney, a bomb was planted and blame arranged to fall on Tom Mooney, tossing his ass in jail, putting the blame squarely on the anarchists.

J: Anarchy has this sorta bad connotation, but anarchy itself is not unlike what so many seem to want to embrace now. I think the libertarian philosophy is fairly anarchic, and you find it widespread throughout the net. It's basically a hands-off philosophy.

T: I think people often take it too seriously, like various anarchist camps that have more rules than not. I consider it a personal philosophy, not a political thing at all. It

Our FWI prez recently had a chance to chat with Tom Jennings, who commented afterwards: "Think you can mention somewhere that I'm a fag anarcho nerd troublemaker/activist? It is important, and to me as well. It always gets buried. Lots of people like to know, especially scared people with no images of people who are gay and reasonably functional in some way." 'Tis our pleasure to honor Tom, whose work has been so brilliant and so far out on the Fringe, that when the US gov't precluded computer technology exports during the Cold War, they basically forgot/ignored a certain fag anarcho nerd from the Bay Area... As a result, Tom's FidoNet now provides the basis for computer networking in Eastern Europe, former USSR and most of the Third World, as well as a extraordinary conduit throughout the rest of the world.

has nothing to do with party-type politics.

J: If it becomes overtly political, it ceases to be anarchy...

T: Yeah, more or less, and I don't really care about what's considered politics *per se*, it's personal interaction, how I treat other people and how they treat me, and my relations to other people, it's anarchism... I always call it Paul Goodman style, which is the principle that people work together better if they're cooperating than if they're coerced. Very simple, nothing to do with goddamn party politics. It has to do with how you treat people that you have to work with. And that's what FidoNet was based on, very explicitly. It was sort of laid over the top of a lot of Fido bulletin boards, and let them talk to each other in a straightforward point-to-point manner.

Just How Big Is It?

J: Was it just Fido boards?

T: Just Fido at the time, because it required a fairly low-level of restructuring of the innards, message bases and stuff. And Fido is a pretty good bulletin board, has been for years, though now it's definitely old fashioned. I haven't done a revision to Fido for over two years.

J: Are you thinking about doing that?

T: There's gateways between [FidoNet and UUCP] operating. You can just set up the UFGate package... [FidoNet and the Internet] they have totally different paradigms. IP, the Internet stuff, is fully connected all the time. When you want to connect to a system in Finland, you just rub packets with them and they come back in generally under a second. FidoNet is all store and forward, offline processing...

J: How big is it now?

T: Just short of 20,000 systems.

J: Wow, that's a lot...

T: It's doubled in a year... I think more than doubled in a year. It's been doubling every year for a long time <laughs>.

—BEGIN PGP PUBLIC KEY BLOCK—

J: There's a lot of discussion today of encryption schemes, are you involved in that?

T: Actually, yeah, I use it routinely.

J: Using PGP?

T: Yeah. FidoNet was pretty intentionally involved in getting PGP ubiquitous the first time around... an intentional, conscious quick-dump of about 10,000 copies in a week, starting on a Monday, just to be

"They think 'Oh, anarchism, that means throwing rocks at the cops!' Well sometimes, I suppose, but that's mostly a cop's definition of it."

T: No, I'm thinking about dropping it. <laughter> I've thought about it, and it's over. So FidoNet started up in spring of '84 with two systems, me and my friend John Madill and within four months there were twenty or fifty... by the end of the year, it was approaching 100 by the next February, in nine months. It started growing really fast. And every single one was run by somebody for their own reasons in their own manner for their own purposes, so FidoNet had to accommodate this. And this is nothing unusual, in one sense. All computer networks are essentially run this way. The Internet is. There's no central Internet authority where you go to get a system in Internet, you just put it online, and find people to help you, register with the NIC [Network Information Center] which is just a convention for handling names.

J: Sort of ideally cooperative.

T: Yeah, it's quite cooperative, and you don't really get kicked out unless you technically screw up, or do something massively illegal or glaringly obvious. Most likely technical, like don't answer mail for a long time. Most electronic things are like that. It didn't start to take off until Echomail came by, which was done by this guy named Jeff Rush in Dallas as a way to talk among Dallas sysops about organizing pizza parties. It's a fully distributed, redundant database using FidoNet netmail to transport the records in the distributed database. It's functionally equivalent to Usenet, they gate back and forth very easily.

J: Can you link FidoNet very easily to Internet or UUCP Mail?

sure that it was unstoppable, and it spread very quickly. Now there's all kinds of arguments over whether it's legal, or whether it's going to incriminate me to use PGP, and the traffic into the network itself...

J: It wouldn't be a criminal issue...

T: People believe all kinds of crazy nonsense.

J: Somebody has a patent on the algorithm, is that it?

T: Yeah, and some people are afraid that if they send or pass encrypted data, that the police will bust into the house and steal the computer, all this kind of stuff... FidoNet sprung up fully-formed out of seeming nowhere into the rest of the computer world. Most people on the Internet have access to it through schools or industry. They went to school, then they got a job, and they grew up with maintained Internet connectivity... they were brought up into the sort of *Internet-hood*.

J: I think that's changing a bit...

T: Oh, it is changing, it will continue to change, and someday it will be incomprehensible that it was this way, but as of today, it's sort of how it is. FidoNet did not come from that direction at all. It came from... the usual white guys who could afford a computer :-), but in the best tradition of radio and astronomy, they were at least amateurs, it's truly an amateur network. It is not professional, as in "profession"... "professional" is frequently used to mean legitimate, as opposed to amateur...

J: You mean "hobbyist?"

T: Yeah, amateur as a word became disparaging, but we mean it actually in the older sense, like the radio amateur sense. We don't do it for money, it's done for the sake of itself. So for the most part, FidoNet members never had that traditional kind of connectivity, and also didn't have the corporate culture, and didn't have the computer network culture, so it basically formed in the dark, on its own.

550 FLAVORS OF CULTURE

J: Speaking of the word "culture," do you find that within the FidoNet universe, there's a particular set of cultural predilections? Does there tend to be a general kind of group or community that uses FidoNet?

T: Well, it's like any of those things, it's really subjective. But, yeah, there do seem to be, in my travels on Internet and FidoNet, distinct flavors. One is not better than the other, I can tell you that, culturally speaking. The Internet people say, "Oh, but the flame level on FidoNet is so awful." Bullshit. The flame level on the Internet is just as high. It's in loftier language, five line signatures, and all that kind of crap... but I'm sorry, it's not any better, it's just different. What it is, is less alien to them, more comfortable... and vice-versa from the FidoNet side. It's more comfortable, it's more familiar, the language used and the acronyms and the smiley faces, all of that junk.

There is a FidoNet flavor, through the usual sociological things. The people who originally populated it defined this vague common set, and people who come onto it *self-select* ("Oh, I like that!") and join it, and then enhance it, or they're sort of neutral and they come in and they just absorb it because... you know, you start hanging out with people, and you pick up their manner of speaking. And there are people, of course, who are ut-

terly opposed to this, and want to make it professional and some just don't care, and live in a corner of it.

But yeah, there are things in common, and I have a hard time putting my finger on what they are. It is fiercely independent, utterly, fiercely independent. It is viciously anti-commercialization. It has a long history of some nasty politics, some really enlightened politics, and I think in a lot of ways they have more pragmatic view, and a better view — better meaning more functional in today's world — than people who haven't had to pay their own phone bills.

J: Some people argue that you can't have strictly online community, and others believe that you can. Some feel that there has to be some kind of face-to-face interaction. In the Internet there has not been as much of that until it began to become more broadly accessible to regular people...

T: The Internet is still completely and thoroughly inaccessible... I'm sorry, it is simply not accessible. You have to have a large amount of hardware or an intimate relationship with someone who does, like you have to go to school or something. Otherwise you're paying money... and there are people who fall through the cracks...

J: How about public access Internet?

T: Yeah, but if there's more than 100 terminals in the U.S. that any average person could walk up to and figure out how to use in less than a week, I would be surprised. It still takes huge amounts of specialized knowledge.

J: But the technical side is fairly dense...

T: Oh, yeah... I've been an SWTP, CP/M, DOS hacker and hardware hacker for fifteen fucking years, twenty years, and UNIX is so intimidating, arbitrarily difficult to use... a lot of the users have this

macho attitude that "Well, you should have to plow through it, I did." The whole priesthood nonsense. It's stupid. And the argument whether online culture is possible or not, that ain't where it's gonna get decided. It either gets made or it doesn't. I think there are online communities. The people who are doing it aren't asking themselves, "Are we an online community?" They're just going about their business. They're not tangible enough to really get documented except in hindsight, you look back and say "Oh, yeah, those people are" or "No, they really weren't, when push came to shove, they didn't stay together."

J: At EFF-Austin we've been a little more self-conscious about it, we've actually been trying to do some community-building, to try to structure an online community in Austin where we'd have some force to get things done, various projects. One of the things we're doing that other EFF-related groups haven't been doing is arts projects, and in doing those things, in talking to some of the people who are interested in doing that, I realized that there are a lot of writers and artists who are hungry to get online. They know it's there, they'd like to be using it, but they can't get access to it because they can't, unless they stumble into it, find a system that'll give them an account. It's kind of like what you were saying about barriers... but I wonder if, in the FidoNet world, you find writers and artists using FidoNet to share information and to form arts communities?

T: Well, there's a lot more less-technical people involved, because you can put a \$300 system together, line cord to phone jack. That just means that the entry level is a lot lower. And it's functional as hell! I mean, So what if it's slow? 5 seconds or 100 milliseconds, what's the difference to most people?

ALL LOOK COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

J: The link, the network, is strictly for email? Or do you have some other stuff, file transfer...?

T: Oh, there's lots of file transfer stuff. In some ways it's a lot more sophisticated than the FTP stuff from the user's point of view. There's this thing called the SDN, the Software Distribution Network, which looks like a conference for files, where the objects are not messages, but files. And they're stored in a redundant manner, some locally concentrated, some far away and scattered. It's kind of nebulous, like most network things are. They do monthly announcements of new files, and most of it's shareware, or free. You can do things like file attach (send with a message), and file requests (file fetch via message).

FidoNet doesn't have the problem that a lot of older networks have, with seven bit channels and all that crap. We have eight bit channels with 32 bit CRCs. We do run into the alien system problems... ASCII character sets vs. the cyrillic alphabets and all that kinda stuff. Those problems are about as chaotic as they are anywhere else.

J: How about remote login?

T: No... the systems in FidoNet are *radically* different. There's RadioShack color computers, there's CP/M machines, Apple IIs, giant DOS machines, giant LANs of UNIX boxes, all running common protocols in a far broader hardware base than most, even UNIX boxes. There's no unified operating system, there's a set of protocols, there's 40 or 50 different mailers, and FidoNet interfaces in bulletin boards, and they all look completely different. So it's at a much higher level of abstraction than the FidoNet gets defined at. I bet a lot of the Internet, some huge proportion, is UNIX...

J: You certainly need some kind of standard to be interoperable to the extent that the Internet is, don't you?

T: No, where the real compatibility is is the TCP/IP layer, and that's rock solid, and that's the thing in common. All the rlogin, telnet, and ftp stuff partly user paradigm, rather than just a set of protocols. It's well, and fine, and wonderful, and I love it, but it does put a real crimp on style.

[Ed Cavazos, almost-attorney and vice-pres of EFF-Austin, shows up and settles in to listen. The conversation continues.]

THE COLOR OF MONEY

T: A lot of FidoNet is so radically different, you can't get people to either hear it or understand what's going on, because it's NOT like any of the others, and it was intentionally not made like the others, and some of the really basic principles that seem random are intentional... they're in writing, and have been in writing for seven years. The strictly American anarchist principles that it's based on are written into the policy documents.

We actually had in '85, '86, '87 an attempted takeover by a corporation that was formed from within, it was like a cancer that became a giant boil on the surface, called IFNA, the International FidoNet Association, that was sort of a good idea, or a potentially good idea, when we started it at the 200 node level. By the time it got around to being implemented, at 500 nodes, the world had utterly changed. With 200 people, you can run it like a club. It was 90% U.S., 90% white guys with computers, and at the 500 node level, it was about 20% European and definitely, obviously growing. It hopped the puddle, with systems appearing in South America, scattered, but you know how that goes... when you get one, then you get two, and then four, and they start to grow.

We were very naive, and I was right in the middle of it. Some of us learned quickly, this isn't going to work! But this corporation grew, and

"They forget that what we're making is a goddamn conduit; it's a medium, it's not content!"

became a 501(c)(3), and like all of those things, they get power-hungry, and they get grabby of territory, and we had to fight it off, and it was fought off by the constituents of the network... and it was killed off. They had gained control of the copyright and the trademarks, and they were fought off. The network, instead of dying, like everyone predicted, thrived.

J: So how did this fight go?

T: It was fought by lawyers and proxy votes and all the usual crap, in a goddamn hotel in San Jose, was the final straw...

J: Were you a part of this corporation at all?

T: Well, a bunch of us started it... at first, we were brainstorming what we could do... deals on modems, some obvious stuff. And we'd have a spokesperson from FidoNet who'd attend the EMA meetings once a year and represent bulletin board operators and FidoNet members in electronic privacy things and the technical trade stuff and the obvious

things. And those are still lacking, we still need them. But it was established really early that everyone not only retains control of their system, but they're expected to do their part to run it, because there is no one else to run it. And as simple as it sounds, it's a really radical act to get that across, so that people don't just sit on their butts. And of course, the usual 10% does the work, and 90% sits on their butts, but that's fine, too.

DOUBLE PLUS PLUS GOOD

T: FidoNet's a little odd, unlike the Internet, which has a domain name system... you say "Connect to toad.com," it says, ".com, okay, over there, toad... here's the address," and you go after it. FidoNet has what appears to be a centralized database that every system in the net has, a copy of this at the moment 2 megabyte long ASCII database, with 20,000 records in it. And it's updated every week, it contains the full physical and logical information about the entire network... phone number, system name, restrictions on use, protocols supported, some ASCII text, like system name, and city, all that kind of junk. It contains the hierarchical addressing scheme of the network, and it contains a lot of redundancy.

J: Given that there's no central authority, who maintains this database?

T: A local autonomous unit in FidoNet... First... the terminology in FidoNet is point-node-net-zone. Points aren't really part of FidoNet, they're a peculiar thing... a node is the basic unit, it is a bulletin board or a mail-only site, generally a phone number with a modem on it. A net is a cluster of Fidos, a cluster of nodes, like San Francisco has Net 125, SFBay Net, 75-80 systems. A node in a net is the basic social organizational unit. It was designed to be small enough to comprehend in regular old terms, like we all know and love, clubs and that kind of group... when they get too big they tend to fragment into pieces, which become autonomous units, then nets are collected into the real-life geography of continents.

The North American phone system is alien to the Western European ones, and they have lots of mutually-alien phone systems. The North

Americans tend to be a lot less political... Zone 1 encompasses Mexico, U.S., and Canada, and nobody ever batted an eye over it. It's like, "Oh, okay, that makes sense." In Europe, they're fiercely defensive of the political boundaries, and it's really silly. Local autonomy was the critical thing to make it work, because who's going to allow somebody in New Jersey to dictate how they're going to run their system? There'd be no way to exert any kind of control, and once you start getting into control wars, you spend all your time doing that.

So the way the node list is made is that every net fragment makes its own chunk of the node list, which is a very straightforward task, even though it ends up being work. They're passed up through regional coordinators who take these fragments, and everybody gets a copy of everybody else's weekly list, and each of them compiles a giant list, then they do a difference, this week from last week, and mail out that difference back down the tree. So if you chopped off half the network and smashed it flat, it would regenerate itself. It's a balance of terror, that's what it is. It's

a genuine balance of terror in responsibility and power. What you get for that redundancy is that no one can cut you out of the network, no one can declare that you can't communicate.

In the UUCP world none of this happens because the social environment is much more substantial... universities, Hewlett Packard... Your neighbors, in theory, can cut you off, and you disappear, no one knows about you, if you're eliminated from the bang path, no one can talk to you, and that's it, you don't exist, it's as simple as that.

In FidoNet, and this has happened recently in England... a bunch of religious fundamentalists by just hammering away gained control of large chunks of the FidoNet in the U.K., and they started having fits... "Why, there's perverts on this board, and we're not gonna have 'em in FidoNet!" <laughter> And they clipped them out of the goddamn list, they removed the entries from the U.K. list. You sort of noticed they disappeared, but those people can still communicate, they can mail you their fragment, hand-generated if necessary, and all the node list processors let you incorporate private lists, and you can reply back, just like that. No one can be cut out of the network.

If you start thinking about it, you realize that there are a number of good and bad side effects from this. Like, if you have some real asshole troublemaker, there's nothing you can do about it. Like, unless somebody comes in and pulls out a gun or something, it's kinda hard to get someone kicked out of a more or less public place... well, [here in] the hotel would be relatively easy, but out in the street, you've just gotta live with your neighbors. And the same is true in the FidoNet. You have to learn to live with your neighbors, and vice versa. The flaming assholes have

to learn how to behave well enough to not be utterly censured. Which is what generally happens to them... people just ignore them.

There was one guy, he was another fundamentalist Christian nut case. He was amusing, actually. He was a "true Bible" believer, this was called pre-rapture, or something or other, some pre-rapture network... he was persecuted by all sides, and he loved it. He was mailing everybody this gibberish, pages and pages of gibberish. And there's programs that just filter out mail, and you say, I don't wanna see mail from this address...

J: A bozofilter.

T: Yeah, basically, it's a bozofilter, we've had 'em for a long time. And there's also another one that's called bounce... whenever you get anything from this guy, bounce it back. It appends a bit of text that says "This message is refused at site so-and-so, have it back," which IRRITATES people! But it just works out that people, even the crazy ones are social organisms. We don't really like to be disliked too widely, we like to have an audience, if nothing else. So that's the underpinnings...

FidoNet has been very flexible technically. When technological changes or opportunities come by, within a year half the net supports them. In about '85 U.S. Robotics very smartly discovered bulletin boards, and they realized the way it works is, even though there's a relatively small number of bulletin board sysops, if you're bulletin board caller, who do you look to to see what hardware to buy? The sysop. And they ask, "What kind of modem do you have... oh, it must be pretty good if you use it," because when it's bad, they mouth off to hundreds of people about it.

So USR basically courted the FidoNet, and said "What do you want to see in a modem?" The first modem they did this with was the

Courier 2400, which was 600 bucks new at the time, or 700 bucks. They offered a 50% off deal, down to about 300 or 400 dollars, which was a bargain, relatively speaking. We wanted true flow control, and a symmetrical modem with basic AT command set, and they did it. It was an instant success. And then they did the HST, much to most of the industry's annoyance, they did this kludgy proprietary asymmetrical protocol 9600 one way, 300 baud the other way... they came to us again, and we worked out more handshake stuff, and started changing protocols on our side.

FidoNet was originally based on xmodem, which is amazingly similar to X.25's packet ack, like Kermit, only much more efficient than Kermit, and very much like UUCP-G, only it's not windowed... blockack blockack blockack... it's fine at 2400 baud and below, above 2400 baud it was not good. We had asymmetrical modems that collapsed. So there had been another protocol called Wazoo around, and it instantly became hot, because it did protocol negotiation when you started a session, and it could pick ZMODEM [trademark Chuck Forseberg], which is fully-windowed, screaming fast, you can run it ackless. You could work the hell out of an HST in ways that other protocols couldn't. Internet protocols and UUCP-G were just useless, in other words, the modem was useless for existing protocols. So FidoNet's historically been very flexible, technology-wise.

MCLUHANITES: MYOPY, MY OPIUM

Ed: Are you familiar with John Quarterman? Have you seen his maps of FidoNet?

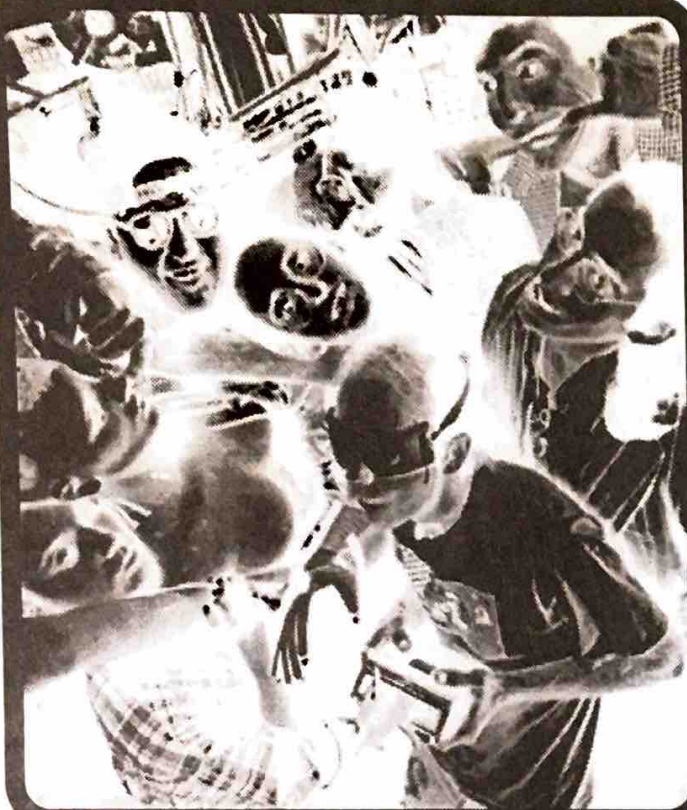
T: No, I haven't seen his maps of FidoNet. [Quarterman did show 'em off later in the conference.] I talk to him occasionally, I republished

one of his articles in FidoNews a while ago... FidoNews is a weird phenomenon in itself... a 20,000 circulation weekly newsletter in its tenth year. It sort of goes unacknowledged... FidoNet has a giant credibility problem, because it sprang forth fully-formed 'way outside all traditional computer things, and because it works on PCs and Radio Shack Color Computers (which actually turns out to be a nice processor, it runs OS9 on a 6809... you can run multiusers on a \$99 packaged machine). It's really some amazing software.

FidoNews was designed in '84 in the first year as the meta-net, to discuss the net itself, to discuss the social end of the net. In the first issue was a retired Air Force colonel or something, whining about the military retirement process, and people instantly said, "This is supposed to be a technical newsletter, this is FidoNet..." and I said, "No, bullshit, it's not. I'm tired of just this techie crap. Do you talk on the phone about your telephone all the time? 'Gee, I've got a great new phone, it's got all these pushbuttons...' and you get bored very quickly. It's like radio amateurs talking about their goddamn antennas." Who wants to put up with that stuff?

J: We've been talking about that a lot. There's three or four magazines devoted to online cultures, cultures of the Matrix, that focus on the Internet a lot. Wired is one, Mondo in a real different way, and BOING-BOING, of course, in a REAL different way. And we realized that a lot of the articles are preoccupied with the carrier, with the technology for carrying messages, and not so much with the messages themselves or the cultures themselves, the sorts of cultures that are evolving.

T: Yeah, they forget that what we're making is a goddamn conduit; it's a medium, it's not content! A content comes with it, be-



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"a fine, fine, blending of the minds..."



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cause they're brand new mediums, they fail a lot, and they need to be developed... all software sucks, and all hardware sucks, so you end up talking about it a lot, but yeah, that's not the point.

J: What's really more fascinating is what's at either end of the conduit...

T: Yeah, the telephone proved that. It's actually a way to convey social information, emotion, that's why telephones worked, you can talk over them. How many ways can you say "No" with a keyboard? Not very many. 25 or 50 if you're incredibly ingenious. Smiley faces and uppercase... All the cultural information is stripped. And a lot of it has simply been access. Those at the gates determine who comes in. If you own the \$5,000 PC...

J: Is that what brings you here [to the fourth conference on Computers, Freedom, and Privacy], access issues?

T: Yeah, that's why I'm always skeptical of large-scale networks. While I'm on the Internet, I don't have any pretensions of being... "Why, the world is connected!" No, one percent of one percent is connected, barely, and the tools really suck. Through no fault of the authors, they're incredible works, the foundation to a world. But they're hardly accessible to everyone in the world.

J: I had to buy my access to the Internet, at first. The WELL...

T: Mine I get because I'm managing a small IP cooperative, and I get it sort of as a perk to my \$400 to \$500 salary for what is essentially a full-time job.

J: Actually, I've been able to pick up other accounts since, but the only way that I could have got in in the first place was by buying access, because I'm not really very technical. My interests are more sociopolitical, I guess...

T: I don't really have any serious problems with the way things exist. For better or worse, that's the way that all complicated things have been developed in our little Western history timeline. It takes resources and effort and energy, and they do spread out, eventually. And they get defined along the way, they definitely have basic cultural assumptions glued into them at the very base.

J: It allows a more distributed way of organizing and doing things...

T: We'll see if it's ever as good as the telephone is. It doesn't get much better than the telephone, when you think about its position in society. Like Bruce said in his *Hacker Crackdown*, you notice them when you don't have one, they're so ubiquitous, they're like light switches. You don't think of a telephone, it's not an exciting object.

J: I can remember when there was a single phone in the house, and it

was a big deal to have a second phone, which was usually on the same line. And now I have three phone lines, and one is a dedicated data line. I don't think I know many people who don't have at least two or three phones in their house.

T: I'm down to two, and I consider that rarefied... I only need two lines now, after having six at one point, all these bulletin boards and data lines, now it's like, oh, a voice line, and a data line...

J: I prefer asynchronous text swapping, but I'm not sure why, maybe a personal idiosyncrasy. It seems funny to me, because Matisse Enzer, the support guy on the WELL... when we're having a problem, and we can't quite figure out how to communicate about it, he always says, "Well look, why don't I call you up, and we'll talk about it." And I always say, "No, wait, I don't wanna talk, I just wanna text!" <laughter>

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FRINGE WARE REVIEW

the abolition of work

..by **Bob Black**

No one should ever work.

Work is the source of nearly all the misery in the world. Almost any evil you'd care to name comes from working or from living in a world designed for work. In order to stop suffering, we have to stop working.

That doesn't mean we have to stop doing things. It does mean creating a new way of life based on play; in other words, a *ludic* revolution. By "play" I mean also festivity, creativity, conviviality, commensality, and maybe even art. There is more to play than child's play, as worthy as that is. I call for a collective adventure in generalized joy and freely interdependent exuberance. Play isn't passive. Doubtless we all need a lot more time for sheer sloth and slack than we ever enjoy now, regardless of income or occupation, but once recovered from employment-induced exhaustion nearly all of us want to act.

The ludic life is totally incompatible with existing reality. So much the worse for "reality," the gravity hole that sucks the vitality from the little in life that still distinguishes it from mere survival. Curiously — or maybe not — all the old ideologies are conservative because they believe in work. Some of them, like Marxism and most brands of anarchism, believe in work all the more fiercely because they believe in so little else.

Liberals say we should end employment discrimination. I say we should end employment. Conservatives support right-to-work laws. Following Karl Marx's wayward son-in-law Paul Lafargue, I support the right to be lazy. Leftists favor full employment. Like the surrealists — except that I'm not kidding — I favor full unemployment. Trotskyists agitate for permanent revolution. I agitate for permanent revelry. But if all the ideologues (as they do) advocate work — and not only because they plan to make other people do theirs — they are strangely reluctant to say so. They will carry on endlessly about wages, hours, working conditions, exploitation, productivity, profitability. They'll gladly talk about anything but work itself. These experts who offer to do our thinking for us rarely share their conclusions about work, for all its saliency in the lives of all of us. Among themselves they quibble over the details. Unions and management agree that we ought to sell the time of our lives in exchange for survival, although they haggle over the price. Marxists think we should be bossed by bureaucrats. Libertarians think we should be bossed by businessmen. Feminists don't care which form bossing takes, so long as the bosses are women. Clearly these ideologymongers have serious differences over how to divvy up the spoils of power. Just as clearly, none of them have any objection to power as such and all of them want to keep us working.

You may be wondering if I'm joking or serious. I'm joking *and* serious. To be ludic is not to be ludicrous. Play doesn't have to be frivolous, although frivolity isn't triviality; very often we ought to take frivolity seriously. I'd like life to be a game — but a game with high stakes. I want to play for keeps.

The alternative to work isn't just idleness. To be ludic is not to be quaaludic. As much as I treasure the pleasure of torpor, it's never more rewarding than when it punctuates other pleasures and pastimes. Nor am I promoting the managed, time-disciplined safety valve called "leisure"; far from it. Leisure is nonwork for the sake of work. Leisure is time spent recovering from work and in the frenzied but hopeless attempt to forget about work. Many people return from vacations so beat that they look forward to returning to work so they can rest up. The main difference between work and leisure is that at work at least you get paid for your alienation and enervation.

I am not playing definitional games with anybody. When I say I want to abolish work, I mean just what I say, but I want to say what I mean by defining my terms in non-idiosyncratic ways. My minimum definition of work is *forced labor*, that is, compulsory production. Both elements are essential. Work is production enforced by economic or political means, by the carrot or the stick. (The carrot is just the stick by other means.) But not all creation is work. Work is never done for its own sake, it's done on account of some product or output that the worker (or, more often, somebody else) gets out of it. This is what work necessarily is. To define it is to despise it. But work is usually even worse than its definition decrees. The dynamic of domination intrinsic to work tends over time toward elaboration. In advanced work-riddled societies, including all industrial societies whether capitalist or "communist," work invariably acquires other attributes which accentuate its obnoxiousness.

Usually — and this is even more true in "communist" than capitalist countries, where the state is almost the only employer and everyone is an employee — work is employment, i.e. wage-labor, which means selling yourself on the installment plan. Thus 95% of Americans who

"Discipline is what the factory and the office and the store share with the prison and the school and the mental hospital..."

work, work for somebody (or something) else. In the USSR or Cuba or Yugoslavia or Nicaragua or any other alternative model which might be adduced, the corresponding figure approaches 100%. Only the embattled Third World peasant bastions — Mexico, India, Brazil, Turkey — temporarily shelter significant concentrations of agneculturists who perpetuate the traditional arrangement of most laborers in the last several millennia, the payment of taxes (= ransom) to the state or rent to parasitic landlords in return for being otherwise left alone. Even this raw deal is beginning to look good. **All industrial (and office) workers are employees and under the sort of surveillance which ensures servility.**

But modern work has worse implications. People don't just work, they have "jobs." One person does one productive task all the time on an or-else basis. Even if the task has a quantum of intrinsic interest (as increasingly many jobs don't) the monotony of its obligatory exclusivity drains its ludic potential. A "job" that might engage the energies of some people, for a reasonably limited time, for the fun of it, is just a burden on

those who have to do it for forty hours a week with no say in how it should be done, for the profit of owners who contribute nothing to the project, and with no opportunity for sharing tasks or spreading the work among those who actually have to do it. This is the real world of work: a world of bureaucratic blundering, of sexual harassment and discrimination, of bonehead bosses exploiting and scapegoating their subordinates who — by any rational/technical criteria — should be calling the shots. But capitalism in the real world subordinates the rational maximization of productivity and profit to the exigencies of organizational control.

The degradation which most workers experience on the job is the sum of assorted indignities which can be denominated as "discipline." Foucault has complexified this phenomenon but it is simple enough. Discipline consists of the totality of totalitarian controls at the workplace — surveillance, rote-work, imposed

work tempos, production quotas, punching-in and -out, etc. Discipline is what the factory and the office and the store share with the prison and the school and the mental hospital. It is something historically original and horrible. It was beyond the capacities of such demonic dictators of yore as Nero and Genghis Khan and Ivan the Terrible. For all their bad intentions, they just didn't have the machinery to control their subjects as thoroughly as modern despots do. Discipline is the distinctively diabolical modern mode of control, it is an innovative intrusion which must be interdicted at the earliest opportunity.

Such is "work." Play is just the opposite. Play is always voluntary. What might otherwise be play is work if it's forced. This is axiomatic. Bernie de Koven has defined play as the "suspension of consequences." This is unacceptable if it implies that play is inconsequential. The point is not that play is without consequenc-

es. This is to demean play. The point is that the consequences, if any, are gratuitous. Playing and giving are closely related, they are the behavioral and transactional facets of the same impulse, the play-instinct. They share an aristocratic disdain for results. The player gets something out of playing; that's why he plays. But the core reward is the experience of the activity itself (whatever it is). Some otherwise attentive students of play, like Johan Huizinga (*Homo Ludens*), define it as game-playing or following rules. I respect Huizinga's erudition but emphatically reject his constraints. There are many good games (chess, baseball, Monopoly, bridge) which are rule-governed but there is much more to play than game-playing. Conversation, sex, dancing, travel — these practices aren't rule-governed but they are surely play if anything is. And rules can be played with at least as readily as anything else.

Work makes a mockery of freedom. The official line is that we all have rights and live in a democracy. Other unfortunates who aren't free like we are have to live in police states. These victims obey orders or else, no matter how arbitrary. The authorities keep them under regular surveillance. State bureaucrats control even the smaller details of everyday life. The officials who push them around are answerable only to higher-ups, public or private. Either way, dissent and disobedience are punished. Informers report regularly to the authorities. All this is supposed to be a very bad thing.

And so it is, although it is nothing but a description of the modern workplace. The liberals and conservatives and Libertarians who lament totalitarianism are phonies and hypocrites. There is more freedom in any moderately de-Stalinized dictatorship than there is in the ordinary American workplace.

You find the same sort of hierarchy and discipline in an office or factory as you do in a prison or a monastery. In fact, as Foucault and others have shown, prisons and factories came in at about the same time, and their operators consciously borrowed from each other's control techniques. A worker is a part-time slave. The boss says when to show up, when to leave, and what to do in the meantime. He tells you how much work to do and how fast. He is free to carry his control to humiliating extremes, regulating, if he feels like it, the clothes you wear or how often you go to the bathroom. With a few exceptions he can fire you for any reason, or no reason. He has you spied on by snitches and supervisors, he amasses a dossier on every employee. Talking back is called "insubordination," just as if a worker is a naughty child, and it not only gets you fired, it disqualifies you for unemployment compensation. Without necessarily endorsing it for them either, it is noteworthy that children at home and in school receive much the same treatment, justified in their case by their supposed immaturity. What does this say about their parents and teachers who work?

The demeaning system of domination I've described rules over half the waking hours of a majority of women and the vast majority of men for decades, for most of their lifespans. For certain purposes it's not too misleading to call our system *democracy or capitalism* or — better still — **industrialism**, but its real names are *factory fascism* and *office oligarchy*. Anybody who says these people are "free" is lying or stupid. You are what you do. If you do boring, stupid, monotonous work, chances are you'll end up boring, stupid, and monotonous. **Work is a much better explanation for the creep-**



ing cretinization all around us than even such significant moronizing mechanisms as television and education. People who are regimented all their lives, handed to work from school and bracketed by the family in the beginning and the nursing home in the end, are habituated to hierarchy and psychologically enslaved. Their aptitude for autonomy is so atrophied that their fear of freedom is among their few rationally grounded phobias. Their obedience training at work carries over into the families they start, thus reproducing the system in more ways than one, and into politics, culture and everything else. Once you drain the vitality from people at work, they'll likely submit to hierarchy and expertise in everything. They're used to it.

We are so close to the world of work that we can't see what it does to us. We have to rely on outside observers from other times or other cultures to appreciate the extremity and the pathology of our present position. There was a time in our own past when the "work ethic" would have been incomprehensible, and perhaps Weber was on to something when he tied its appearance to a religion, Calvinism, which if it emerged today instead of four centuries ago would immediately and appropriately be labelled a cult. Be that as it may, we have only to draw upon the wisdom of antiquity to put work in perspective. The ancients saw work for what it is, and their view prevailed (the Calvinist cranks notwithstanding) until overthrown by industrialism — but not before receiving the endorsement of its prophets.

Let's pretend for a moment that work doesn't turn people into stultified submissives. Let's pretend, in defiance of any plausible psychology and the ideology of its boosters, that it has no effect on the formation of character. And

let's pretend that work isn't as boring and tiring and humiliating as we all know it really is. Even then, work would still make a mockery of all humanistic and democratic aspirations, just because it usurps so much of our time. Socrates said that manual laborers make bad friends and bad citizens because they have no time to fulfill the responsibilities of friendship and citizenship. He was right. Because of work, no matter what we do, we keep looking at our watches. The only thing "free" about so-called free time is that it doesn't cost the boss anything. Free time is mostly devoted to getting ready for work, going to work, returning from work, and recovering from work. Free time is a euphemism for the peculiar way labor, as a factor of production, not only transports itself at its own expense to and from the workplace, but assumes primary responsibility for its own maintenance and repair. Coal and steel don't do that. Lathes and typewriters don't do that. No wonder Edward G. Robinson in one of his gangster movies exclaimed, "Work is for saps!"

Both Plato and Xenophon attribute to Socrates and obviously share with him an awareness of the destructive effects of work on the worker as a citizen and as a hu-

pologists. The Kapauku of West Irian, according to Posposil, have a conception of balance in life and accordingly work only every other day, the day of rest designed "to regain the lost power and health." Our ancestors, even as late as the eighteenth century when they were far along the path to our present predicament, at least were aware of what we have forgotten, the underside of industrialization. Their religious devotion to "St. Monday" — thus establishing a de facto five-day week 150-200 years before its legal consecration — was the despair of the earliest factory owners. They took a long time in submitting to the tyranny of the bell, predecessor of the time clock. In fact it was necessary for a generation or two to replace adult males with women accustomed to obedience and children who could be molded to fit industrial needs. Even the exploited peasants of the *ancien regime* wrested substantial time back from their landlords' work. According to Lafargue, a fourth of the French peasants' calendar was devoted to Sundays and holidays, and Chayanov's figures from villages in Czarist Russia — hardly a progressive society — likewise show a fourth or fifth of peasants' days devoted to repose. Controlling for productivity, we are obvi-

ously far behind these backward societies. The exploited *muzhiks* would wonder why any of us are working at all. So should we. To grasp the full enormity of our deterioration, however, consider the earliest condition of humanity, without government or property, when we wandered as hunter-gatherers. Hobbes surmised that life was then nasty, brutish and short. Others assume that life was a desperate unremitting struggle for subsistence, a war waged against a harsh Nature with death and disaster awaiting the unlucky or anyone who was unequal to the challenge of the struggle for existence. Actually, that was all a projection of fears for the collapse of government authority over communities unaccustomed to doing without it, like the England of Hobbes during the Civil War. Hobbes' compatriots had already encountered alternative forms of society which illustrated other ways of life — in North America, particularly — but already these were too remote from their experience to be understandable. (The lower orders, closer to the condition of the Indians, understood it better and often found it attractive. Throughout the seventeenth century, English settlers defected to Indian tribes or, captured in war, refused to return to the colonies. But the Indians no more defected to white settlements than West Germans climb the Berlin Wall from the west.) The "survival of the fittest" version — the Thomas Huxley version — of Darwinism was a better account of economic conditions in Victorian England than it was of natural selection, as the anarchist Kropotkin showed in his book *Mutual Aid, a Factor in Evolution*. (Kropotkin was a scientist who'd had

"Directly or indirectly, work will kill most of the people who read these words..."

man being. Herodotus identified contempt for work as an attribute of the classical Greeks at the zenith of their culture. To take only one Roman example, Cicero said that "whoever gives his labor for money sells himself and puts himself in the rank of slaves." His candor is now rare, but contemporary primitive societies which we are wont to look down upon have provided spokesmen who have enlightened Western anthro-

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ample involuntary opportunity for fieldwork whilst exiled in Siberia: he knew what he was talking about.) Like most social and political theory, the story Hobbes and his successors told was really unacknowledged autobiography.

The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins, surveying the data on contemporary hunter-gatherers, exploded the Hobbesian myth in an article entitled "The Original Affluent Society." They work a lot



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less than we do, and their work is hard to distinguish from what we regard as play. Sahllins concluded that "hunters and gatherers work less than we do; and, rather than a continuous travail, the food quest is intermittent, leisure abundant, and there is a greater amount of sleep in the daytime per capita per year than in any other condition of society." They worked an average of four hours a day, assuming they were "working" at all. Their "labor," as it appears to us, was skilled labor which exercised their physical and intellectual capacities; unskilled labor on any large scale, as Sahllins says, is impossible except under industrialism. Thus it satisfied Friedrich Schiller's definition of play, the only occasion on which man realizes his complete humanity by giving full "play" to both sides of his twofold nature, thinking and feeling. Play and freedom are, as regards production, coextensive. Even Marx, who belongs (for all his good intentions) in the productivist pantheon, observed that

"the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and external utility is required." He never could quite bring himself to identify this happy circumstance as what it is, the abolition of work — it's rather anomalous, after all, to be pro-worker and anti-work — but we can.

The aspiration to go backwards or forwards to a life without work is evident in every serious social or cultural history of pre-industrial Europe, among them M. Dorothy George's *England in Transition* and Peter Burke's *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Also pertinent is Daniel Bell's essay "Work and Its Discontents," the first text, I believe, to refer to the "revolt against work" in so many words and, had it been understood, an important correction to the complacency ordinarily associated with the volume in which it was collected, *The End of Ideology*. Neither critics nor celebrants have noticed that Bell's end-of-ideology

thesis signalled not the end of social unrest but the beginning of a new, uncharted phase unconstrained and uninformed by ideology.

As Bell notes, Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*, for all his enthusiasm for the market and the division of labor, was more alert to (and more honest about) the seamy side of work than Ayn Rand or the Chicago economists or any of Smith's modern epigones. As Smith observed: "The understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose life is spent in performing a few simple operations... has no occasion to exert his understanding... He generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become." Here, in a few blunt words, is my critique of work. Bell, writing in 1956, the Golden Age of Eisenhower imbecility and American self-satisfaction, identified the unorganized, unorganizable malaise of the 1970's and since, the one no political tendency is able to harness, the one identified in HEW's report *Work in America*, the one which cannot be exploited and so is ignored. It does not figure in any text by any laissez-faire economist — Milton Friedman, Murray Rothbard, Richard Posner — because, in their terms, as they used to say on *Star Trek*, "it does not compute."

If these objections, informed by the love of liberty, fail to persuade humanists of a utilitarian or even paternalist turn, there are others which they cannot disregard. Work is hazardous to your health, to borrow a book title. In fact, work is mass murder or genocide. Directly or indirectly, work will kill most of the people who read these words. Between 14,000 and 25,000 workers are killed annually in this country on the job.

Over two million are disabled. Twenty to 25 million are injured every year. And these figures are based on a very conservative estimation of what constitutes a work-related injury. Thus they don't count the half-million cases of occupational disease every year. I looked at one medical textbook on occupational diseases which was 1,200 pages long. Even this barely scratches the surface. The available statistics count the obvious cases like the 100,000 miners who have black lung disease, of whom 4,000 die every year. What the statistics don't show is that tens of millions of people have their lifespans shortened by work — which is all that homicide means, after all. Consider the doctors who work themselves to death in their late 50's. Consider all the other workaholics.

Even if you aren't killed or crippled while actually working, you very well might be while going to work, coming from work, looking for work, or trying to forget about work. The vast majority of victims of the automobile are either doing one of these work-obligatory activities or else fall afoul of those who do them. To this augmented body-count must be added the victims of auto-industrial pollution and work-induced alcoholism and drug addiction. Both cancer and heart disease are modern afflictions normally traceable, directly or indirectly, to work.

Work, then, institutionalizes homicide as a way of life. People think the Cambodians were crazy for exterminating themselves, but are we any different? The Pol Pot regime at least had a vision, however blurred, of an egalitarian society. We kill people in the six-figure range (at least) in order to sell Big Macs and Cadillacs to the survivors. Our forty or fifty thousand annual highway fatalities are victims, not martyrs. They died for nothing — or rather, they

died for work. But work is nothing to die for.

State control of the economy is no solution. Work is, if anything, more dangerous in the state-socialist countries than it is here. Thousands of Russian workers were killed or injured building the Moscow subway. Stories reverberate about covered-up Soviet nuclear disasters which make Times Beach and Three Mile Island look like elementary-school air-raid drills. On the other hand, deregulation, currently fashionable, won't help and will probably hurt. From a health and safety standpoint, among others, work was at its worst in the days when the economy most closely approximated laissez-faire. Historians like Eugene Genovese have argued persuasively that — as antebellum slavery apologists insisted — factory wage-workers in the North American states and in Europe were worse off than Southern plantation slaves. No rearrangement of relations among bureaucrats seems to make much difference at the point of production. Serious enforcement of even the rather vague standards enforceable in theory by OSHA would probably bring the economy to a standstill. The enforcers apparently appreciate this, since they don't even try to crack down on most malefactors.

What I've said so far ought not to be controversial. Many workers are fed up with work. There are high and rising rates of absenteeism, turnover, employee theft and sabotage, wildcat strikes, and overall goldbricking on the job. There may be some movement toward a conscious and not just visceral rejection of work. And yet the prevalent feeling, universal among bosses and their agents and also widespread among workers themselves, is that work itself is inevitable and necessary.

I disagree. It is now possible to abolish work and replace it, insofar as it serves useful purposes, with a multitude of new kinds of free activities. To abolish work requires going at it from two directions, quantitative and qualitative. On the one hand, on the quantitative side, we have to cut down massively on the amount of work being done. At present most work is useless or worse and we should simply get rid of it. On the other hand — and I think this is the crux of the matter and the revolutionary new departure — **we have to take what useful work remains and transform it into a pleasing variety of game-like and craft-like pastimes, indistinguishable from other pleasurable pastimes except that they happen to yield useful end-products.** Surely that wouldn't make them *less* enticing to do. Then all the artificial barriers of power and property could come down. Creation could become recreation. And we could all stop being afraid of each other.

I don't suggest that most work is salvageable in this way. But then most work isn't worth trying to save. Only a small and diminishing fraction of work serves any useful purpose independent of the defense and reproduction of the work-system and its political and legal appendages. Twenty years ago, Paul and Percival Goodman estimated that just five percent of the work then being done — presumably the figure, if accurate, is lower now — would satisfy our minimal needs for food, clothing and shelter. Theirs was only an educated guess but the main point is quite clear: directly or indirectly, most work serves the unproductive purposes of commerce or social control. Right off the bat we can liberate tens of millions of salesmen, soldiers, managers, cops, stockbrokers, clergymen, bankers, lawyers, teachers, landlords, security

guards, ad-men and everyone who works for them. There is a snowball effect since every time you idle some bigshot you liberate his flunkies and underlings also. **Thus the economy implodes.**

Forty percent of the workforce are white-collar workers, most of whom have some of the most tedious and idiotic jobs ever concocted. Entire industries, insurance and banking and real estate for instance, consist of nothing but useless paper-shuffling. It is no accident that the "tertiary sector," the service sector, is growing while the "secondary sector" (industry) stagnates and the "primary sector" (agriculture) nearly disappears. Because work is unnecessary except to those whose power it secures, workers are shifted from relatively useful to relatively useless occupations as a measure to ensure public order. Anything is better than nothing. That's why you can't go home just because you finish early. **They want your time, enough of it to make you theirs, even if they have no use**

for most of it. Otherwise why hasn't the average work week gone down by more than a few minutes in the last fifty years?

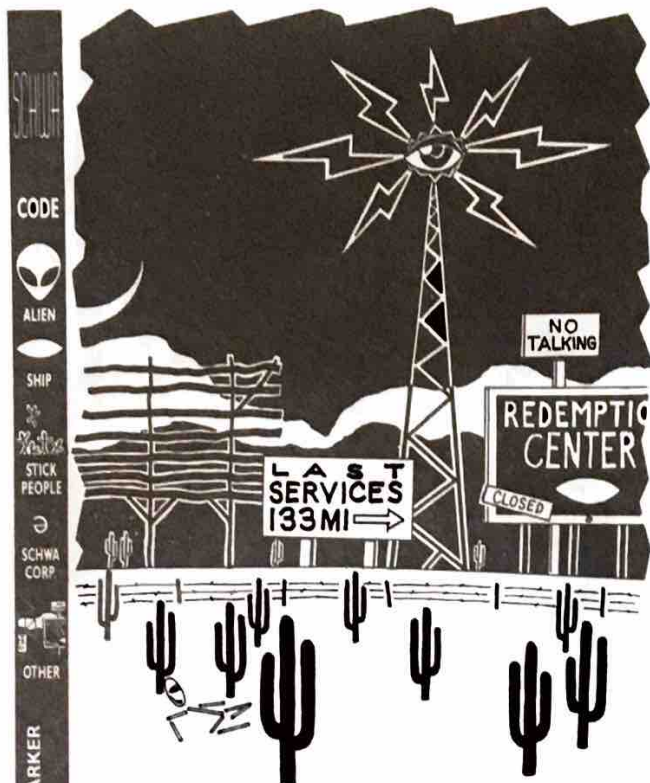
Next we can take a meat-cleaver to production work itself. No more war production, nuclear power, junk food, feminine hygiene deodorant — and above all, no more auto industry to speak of. An occasional Stanley Steamer or Model T might be all right, but the auto-eroticism on which such pestholes as Detroit and Los Angeles depend is out of the question. Already, without even trying, we've virtually solved the energy crisis, the environmental crisis and assorted other insoluble social problems.

Finally, we must do away with far and away the largest occupation, the one with the longest hours, the lowest pay and some of the most tedious tasks. I refer to *housewives* doing housework and child-rearing. By abolishing wage-labor and achieving full unemployment we undermine the sexual division of labor. The nuclear family as we

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know it is an inevitable adaptation to the division of labor imposed by modern wage-work. Like it or not, as things have been for the last century or two, it is economically rational for the man to bring home the bacon, for the woman to do the shitwork and provide him with a haven in a heartless world, and for the children to be marched off to youth concentration camps called "schools," primarily to keep them

sary. Bound up with this no-nukes strategy is the abolition of childhood and the closing of the schools. There are more full-time students than full-time workers in this country. We need children as teachers, not students. They have a lot to contribute to the ludic revolution because they're better at playing than grown-ups are. Adults and children are not identical but they will become equal

and planned obsolescence should have a good time devising means to eliminate fatigue and tedium and danger from activities like mining. Undoubtedly they'll find other projects to amuse themselves with. Perhaps they'll set up worldwide all-inclusive multi-media communications systems or found space colonies. Perhaps. I myself am no gadget freak. I wouldn't care to live in a push button paradise. I don't want robot slaves to do everything; I want to do things myself. There is, I think, a place for labor-saving technology, but a modest place. The historical and pre-historical record is not encouraging. When productive technology went from hunting-gathering to agriculture and on to industry, work increased while skills and self-determination diminished. The further evolution of industrialism has accentuated what Harry Braverman called the degradation of work. Intelligent observers have always been aware of this. John Stuart Mill wrote that all the labor-saving inventions ever devised haven't saved a moment's labor. The enthusiastic technophiles — Saint-Simon, Comte, Lenin, B.F. Skinner — have always been unabashed authoritarians [Ed's note: see *DIS NET review*] also; which

purposes than the run of high tech, let's give them a hearing.

What I really want to see is work turned into play. A first step is to discard the notions of a "job" and an "occupation." Even activities that already have some ludic content lose most of it by being reduced to jobs which certain people, and only those people, are forced to do to the exclusion of all else. Is it not odd that farm workers toil painfully in the fields while their air-conditioned masters go home every weekend and putter about in their gardens? Under a system of permanent revelry, we will witness the Golden Age of the dilettante which will put the Renaissance to shame. There won't be any more jobs, just things to do and people to do them.

The secret of turning work into play, as Charles Fourier demonstrated, is to arrange useful activities to take advantage of whatever it is that various people at various times in fact enjoy doing. To make it possible for some people to do the things they could enjoy, it will be enough just to eradicate the irrationalities and distortions which afflict these activities when they are reduced to work. I, for instance, would enjoy doing some (not too much) teaching, but I don't want coerced students and I don't

"To be ludic is not to be quaaludic. As much as I treasure the pleasure of torpor, it's never more rewarding than when it punctuates other pleasures and pastimes."

out of Mom's hair but still under control, and incidentally to acquire the habits of obedience and punctuality so necessary for workers. If you would be rid of patriarchy, get rid of the nuclear family whose unpaid "shadow work," as Ivan Illich says, makes possible the work-system that makes it neces-

through interdependence. Only play can bridge the generation gap. I haven't as yet even mentioned the possibility of cutting way down on the little work that remains by automating and cybernizing it. All the scientists and engineers and technicians freed from bothering with war research

is to say, technocrats. We should be more than sceptical about the promises of the computer mystics. They work like dogs; chances are, if they have their way, so will the rest of us. But if they have any particularized contributions more readily subordinated to human

care to suck up to pathetic pedants for tenure.

Second, there are some things that people like to do from time to time, but not for too long, and certainly not all the time. You might enjoy baby-sitting for a few hours in order to share the company of kids, but not as much as their

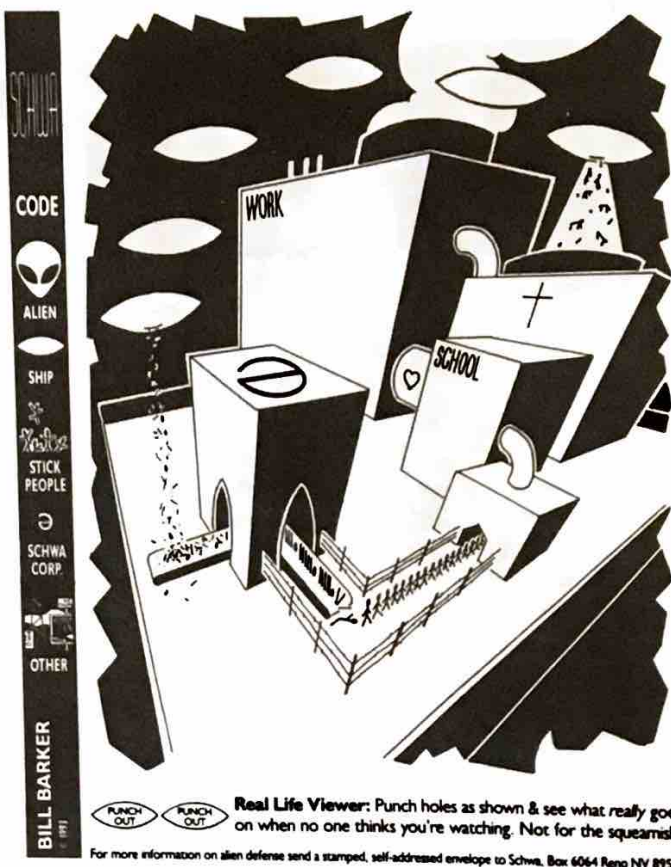
parents do. The parents meanwhile profoundly appreciate the time to themselves that you free up for them, although they'd get fretful if parted from their progeny for too long. These differences among individuals are what make a life of free play possible. The same principle applies to many other areas of activity, especially the primal ones. Thus many people enjoy cooking when they can practice it seriously at their leisure, but not when they're just fuelling up human bodies for work.

Third, other things being equal, some things that are unsatisfying if done by yourself or in unpleasant surroundings or at the orders of an overlord are enjoyable, at least for a while, if these circumstances are changed. This is probably true, to some extent, of all work. People deploy their otherwise wasted ingenuity to make a game of the least inviting drudge-jobs as best they can. Activities that appeal to some people don't always appeal to all others, but everyone at least potentially has a variety of interests and an interest in variety. As the saying goes, "anything once." Fourier was the master at speculating about how aberrant and perverse penchants could be put to use in post-civilized society, what he called Harmony. He thought the Emperor Nero would have turned out all right if as a child he could have indulged his taste for bloodshed by working in a slaughterhouse. Small children who notoriously relish wallowing in filth could be organized in "Little Hordes" to clean toilets and empty the garbage, with medals awarded to the outstanding. I am not arguing for these precise examples but for the underlying principle, which I think makes perfect sense as one dimension of an overall revolutionary transformation. Bear in mind that we don't have to take today's work just as we find it and

match it up with the proper people, some of whom would have to be perverse indeed.

If technology has a role in all this, it is less to automate work out of existence than to open up new realms for re/creation. To some extent we may want to return to handicrafts, which William Morris considered a probable and desirable upshot of communist revolution. Art would be taken back from the snobs and collectors, abolished as a specialized department catering to an elite audience, and its qualities of beauty and creation restored to integral life from which they were stolen by work. It's a sobering thought that the Grecian urns we write odes about and showcase in museums were used in their own time to store olive oil. I doubt our everyday artifacts will fare as well in the future, if there is one. The point is that there's no such thing as progress in the world of work; if anything, it's just the opposite. We shouldn't hesitate to pilfer the past for what it has to offer, the ancients lose nothing yet we are enriched.

The reinvention of daily life means marching off the edge of our maps. There is, it is true, more suggestive speculation than most people suspect. Besides Fourier and Morris — and even a hint, here and there, in Marx — there are the writings of Kropotkin, the syndicalists Pataud and Pouget, anarcho-communists old (Berkman) and new (Bookchin). The Goodman brother's *Communitas* is exemplary for illustrating what forms follow from given functions (purposes), and there is something to be gleaned from the often hazy heralds of alternative/appropriate/intermediate/convivial technology, like Schumacher and especially Illich, once you disconnect their fog machines. The situationists — as represented by Vaneigem's *Revolution of Everyday Life*



and in the *Situationist International Anthology* — are so ruthlessly lucid as to be exhilarating, even if they never did quite square the endorsement of the rule of the workers' councils with the abolition of work. Better their incongruity, though, than any extant version of leftism, whose devotees look to be the last champions of work, for if there were no work there would be no workers, and without workers, who would the left have to organize?

So the abolitionists will be largely on their own. No one can say what would result from unleashing the creative power stultified by work. Anything can happen. The tiresome debater's problem of freedom vs. necessity, with its theological overtones, resolves itself practically once the production of use-values is coextensive with the consumption of delightful play-activity.

Life will become a game, or rather many games, but not — as it is now — a zero/sum game. An optimal sexual encounter is the

paradigm of productive play. The participants potentiate each other's pleasures, nobody keeps score, and everybody wins. The more you give, the more you get. In the ludic life, the best of sex will diffuse into the better part of daily life. Generalized play leads to the libidinization of life. Sex, in turn, can become less urgent and desperate, more playful. If we play our cards right, we can all get more out of life than we put into it; but only if we play for keeps. *Workers of the world... RELAX!*

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sharetext edition 2.0

..by Tod Foley

THE PREAMBLE

At current there exists no easy way for the professional or amateur writer to release his works to the public without (A) relinquishing a large degree of control over the form and content of the work (to agents, editors, publishers, etc.), (B) accepting the ridiculous imposition of additional production costs on the total price of the work, and (C) releasing the physical development of the work to the terms of the "pyramid of publication": an oversized and sluggish construct which serves the economic interests of publishers and printers before and above those of writers (and by far!)

While I have no personal or professional qualms against editors, agents and publishers in general, I believe that (A) the time has arrived for writers to regain some of their lost professional autonomy, (B) all literary works should be easily and publicly accessible, and (C) the only people who can meaningfully be involved in determining the "value" of a work are the writer and the reader.

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Author's Suggested Compensation = TextTrade: Authors' Rights, Intellectual Property, World Literary Law

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"While I have no personal or professional qualms against editors, agents and publishers in general, I believe the time has arrived for writers to regain some of their lost professional autonomy..."

While this position may sound extreme, I should hasten to add that I do not envision, nor desire, an immediate and total overthrowing of the publishing industry. I am a professional writer, and I will continue to make certain of my works available through traditional channels. I do feel, however, that there is more than enough room in this world for alternative marketing strategies to proliferate and compete freely, and that mere "tradition" does not justify the difficulties undergone by writers seeking exposure, or the high costs paid by their readers.

What I shall propose here is, at root, another literary market, a "writers' market," which is smaller, faster, more future-globally-oriented and less needlessly populated than the "pyramid of publication." This market, which exists alongside (or "underneath?") the traditional publishing industry, should be seen by writers as a *Temporary Autonomous Zone* in a new society which places artists and audiences on a par, alleviating the need for middlemen.

The miraculous development which allows for — even calls for — the implementation of such a revolutionary idea is, of course, the advent of global telecomputing. The incredible rate of growth evidenced by proliferation of Internet servers and dial-in Bulletin Boards (BBS) is more than an adequate example of the truly awe-inspiring efficacy of this metamedium we call "the Net." For the first time in history, the entire planet can be united "from the underground up" — the Net has succeeded in creating an entirely new

world-view. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that both public and professional definitions of labor, copyright, intellectual ownership and economic autonomy will need to be restructured.

And while many have voiced their understandable concern over what they fear will be the eventual commercialization of the Internet, I must point out that a few more potentially frightening corporate entities already have their feet in the door. Accordingly, I simply wish to remind the alarmist that it is not evil to need money (or information, or any other resource) in this world — it's all a matter of what you do with it, and whether you make a practical contribution to the world with it. In the words of another somewhat extreme artist: "Fight the real enemy."

For many literary works (especially those compiled or created by students and educators, without care of economic compensation), the Net has already proven itself to be viable — even vital — as a distribution/exposure system. And with the addition and public acceptance of a simple and suitable procedure, works such as these might be made even more accessible to even more people. In addition (and to slip into marketing jargon), the low cost of producing and distributing these tree-friendly, electronic meme patterns will be passed directly on to the consumer.

The following proposal delineates such a procedure, which I call *ShareText*.

THE PURPOSE

(1) To release new and original works of literary art, both fact and fiction, into the *Global Telecommunications Matrix* on a "ShareWare" basis, meaning that users are permitted to download and read the text freely and decide whether they find it useful or entertaining before compensating the author as suggested.

(2) To increase the amount, quality, and availability of literature written by individuals who believe that the global public should be able to access their information freely and easily, and that individual readers are entitled to determine for themselves the "real" value of the work in question.

THE PARTICIPANTS

ShareText is a body of procedure which is released to the world for free use. As such it may be utilized by anyone, although it is expected that the majority of contributors will be academicians, students, and writers (both professional and amateur).

THE PROCEDURE

Every ShareText Work possesses an *IDBlock*, which is included at both the beginning and end of the file. The *IDBlock* includes all the following information:

- Title of Work
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- Statement of Originality

Plus the following optional information:

- Author(s)/Representative's Business Address/PO Box
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- <and> Author(s) Suggested Compensation

The *Statement of Originality* includes words to the following effect:

(for fiction): This is a completely original literary work by <author>, who bears all customary responsibilities for its contents and arrangement. The characters and events portrayed herein are fictional; any resemblance to other characters living or dead is entirely coincidental.

(for non-fiction): This is a completely original presentation of fact by <author>, who bears all customary responsibilities for its contents and arrangement. All References and Sources are noted and credited.

Suggested Compensation may include any of the below:

- A fixed monetary amount (author must indicate national currency)
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- An unspecified monetary amount (depending upon readers' subjective judgement as to the value of the text — author must indicate national currency)
- TextTrade (i.e.; author will accept other original texts as compensation, the topics of which may be specified — author must include Internet or Postal Address)

THE PHINE PRINT

ShareText is a revolutionary idea which may have significant impact on the future of literature and the dissemination of information for and by the citizens of the Earth.

As a body of custom it requires that all participants both accept and adhere to the procedures upon which it is based. As a system of ethical electronic information distribution it requires that all works contributed must, to the very best of the contributor's knowledge, be completely original, infringe upon the rights of no other authors, include no proprietary or "trade" information, and adhere in all other ways to the stipulations of international copyright law.

In order to be practical for the largest number of users, ShareText Files should be formatted in standard ASCII text or compressed using commonly available compression utilities (preferably FreeWare or ShareWare). They should have a filename of no more than eight characters (standard IBM ASCII set), and should bear the filename extension .STF so that browsers may easily identify them as ShareText Files.

Since ShareText Files which have been ZIP'ed or otherwise compressed will only bear the default extensions provided by the uploader's Compression program, it is recommended wherever possible that the uploader include the word SHARETEXT in the file's "external" summary/description. If this is not possible due to limitations of the platform, it is recommended that pointers be posted in a relevant Conference or Group within the same system.

Quotations, References and Excerpts from other Works in any media included within the body of a ShareText File must be noted by use of standard academic research procedures (i.e.; footnotes including referenced author's/researcher's name & year of referenced work AND/OR a formal bibliography or sources listing).

In addition, it may become necessary (or at least expedient) to develop and maintain some sort of

Index of ShareText Files (inasmuch as such a thing would be possible) — this catalog would by necessity be constructed in an ad-hoc nature, not unlike the BBS Lists which circulate the Net, and may be best maintained in the form of a Usenet Newsgroup such as "alt.sharetxt.index"

NOTES

(1) A *Temporary Autonomous Zone* is an area of SpaceTimeMeaning in which a population of lucky "misfits" from a mixed bag of cultures collaboratively creates an extemporaneous society notable for its high degree of individual freedom. The phrase was first used by Philosopher/Author Hakim Bey, and the concept receives an excellent treatment in his highly commendable book of the same title.

(2) "Fight the real enemy" was, to the knowledge of anyone I know, the last sentence ever uttered by the beautiful and foolhardy Sinead O'Connor.

I am interested in hearing any opinions you may on this and related subjects, and I will attempt to respond personally to all communications. I hereby release this body of procedure unto you, to utilize or ignore as you see fit. Respectfully submitted, 27 March 1993

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Author wishes to thank all the Fringoids who participated in public and private email discussions of this topic, especially Richard Gardner, Mitchell Porter, and Gail Sullivan. Further developments will be posted regularly via the FringeWare email list as "ShareText Updates"

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book reviews

HACKER CRACKDOWN: LAW AND DISORDER ON THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER

BRUCE STERLING

BANTAM, 1992

US\$23, 328 PAGES

Bruce Sterling's *Hacker Crackdown* has been discussed to death, but its relevance to garage tech and FringeWare is such that we have to mention it here. The book is not really about hacker freedom or police mentality, though both certainly figure prominently in the picture, they're not what's *w-w-wrong* with it. The book is about ignorance, and how when ignorance combines with power, it approaches evil. The French existentialist writer Albert Camus equated evil with ignorance, and he was talking about a profound state of ignorance, not so much stupidity as insensitivity; not the failure to grasp, but the failure to use the ability to grasp. Ignorance ain't bliss.

Bruce Sterling respects the law and has no axe to grind with law enforcement, but what he

writes about here is how the police function, ineluctably tied to power and politics, is corruptible in ways that are not obvious to the cops themselves, or to the average guy on the street. In this case, an ambitious prosecutor from Illinois, William Cook, evidently ignorant of computer technology and certainly ignorant of the hacker/BBS scene, ordered investigations that he thought would reveal some kind of hacker conspiracy to bring down the communications infrastructure of the U.S., or at least the 911 system. He and his staff, at least in the beginning, equated the "theft" of a relatively innocuous document from Bell South with some kind of hack to the 911 system, and their confusion led to the raid March 1, 1990, on Steve Jackson Games, an employee of which was thought to have been holding or circulating the document.

Hindsight tells us that this particular document was no big deal, and there's a real question whether copying a document found to be

Steve became poster boy for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a technoid civil liberties organization that contributed heavily to pursuing the litigation. The issue, again, was ignorance... ignorance of a citizen's rights, in this case. Sam Sparks questioned the SS agent pointedly: Why keep the man's computer, which is essential to his company's livelihood, for *three months* when it wouldn't take an hour to back up the hard drive where any incriminating info would be found.

Seizure is the strategy in most of the hacker raids, where all computer equipment is confiscated but no charges are ever brought. If you've got the "criminal's" tools, he can't do his "crimes", right? In a recent newspaper story about a series of confiscations, an officer was quoted comparing modems to loaded guns. If modems are outlawed, only outlaws will have modems...

This is troubling. As American citizens, we figure we can have the reasonable expectation

"Ignorance Ain't Bliss..."



**WILLIAM COOK,
ON THE WITNESS STAND...**

readily available to the public could be called "theft." (As Stewart Brand has said, "Information wants to be free." How is it that duplication is regarded as theft?) William Cook, though, might've had good intentions, might've thought he was saving the integrity of the 911 system... Ignorance. (By the way, the more cynical interpretation, implied by Sterling, is that Cook was looking at the political mileage he'd gain by busting a ring of hackers posing a threat to national security... still *Ignorance*).

Steve Jackson, a brilliant game designer, was clearly the wrong guy to raid. He is scrupulously honest, and not about to front even the most innocuous threat to the civic good. And he's a fighter. He fought to learn why he'd been raided and, having learned the bogus nature of the raid, he fought to have the government droids (the Secret Service, in fact) "put up or shut up." They never brought charges, so he sued 'em., and won.

that, if we're suspected of wrongdoing, we'll be accused, brought to trial, and we'll have the chance to show defense... we're supposedly INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY. The confiscations mentioned here fairly trash this expectation... they can make punitive confiscation of your hardware and hold it indefinitely, it seems... unless you're prepared, with money as well as chutzpa, to fight.

Hell to think we'd have to fight the guys who're sworn to protect us... but it's not them that we're fighting, they're probably fine men and women with good intentions... but ignorant, at times, and it's ignorance that we're fighting, after all. — Jon Lebkowsky

Opinions and dialogue about the electronic frontier are welcomed! Send to: jonl@wixer.bga.com

1/e²

INTERNET: MAILING LISTS, 1993 EDITION
EDWARD HARDIE AND VIVIAN NEOU, EDS.
PRENTICE HALL, 1993
ISBN: 0-13-327941-3
US\$26, 356 PAGES

Given the cover price, I'm slightly bewildered as to why I bought this book. Most of it could have been download via FTP, and by the time the printed version reached my hands, the online version had already put it out of date...

popular software packages take center stage on their own dedicated email lists, along with most current interests in policy, society, history, hard sciences, languages, etc. Even *Mystery Science Theater 3000* has its own list—contact moderator Rich Kulawiec atrsk@gynko.circ.upenn.edu with "mst3k" somewhere in the "Subject:" line.

"Et cetera" is pretty much the operative phrase here. Whatever people enjoy discussing, which-

Lists also build community, catalyzing the formation of political activity and social fabric. The only problem with email lists, which you'll find out once you've started to "hang out" on them for a while, is the volume of message traffic. People who get bombarded with hundreds of email messages per day from relative strangers tend to become mildly schizophrenic - including the list moderators! *<grin>* The issue is probably one part informa-

"Arguably, the most active attractors on the planet for human discourse and the accumulation of wisdom"

Even so, if the subject intrigues you then take a look at the book. There's a brief intro that offers a few munchy sound bites explaining *Internet*, *BITNET*, *USENET* and the concept of electronic mailing lists. Chapter Two explains how to join a list and suggests tips on Internet etiquette (aka "Netiquette") once you get there, to "help you make your participation on a list meaningful and embarrassment-free." Chapter Three discusses "Starting Your Own List" which pretty much covers the bases, including who to publicize your new list. Examples cite the two most popular mail server packages, *LISTSERV* on *BITNET* hosts and *Majordomo* on Unix systems.

The rest of the book presents the famous *List Of Lists* which has been maintained for many years by Rich Zellich at SRI. The information can always be obtained via anonymous FTP at - <ftp.nisc.sri.com:/netinfo/interest-groups>

Internet: Mailing Lists provides a catalog of the 800+ list entries in an easy-to-read format, which is something you wouldn't get unless you have a big-screen workstation and/or high-quality printer-but the latter option might cost more in terms of time, paper and toner than the 7.5 cent-per-page cover price *anyway*. Oh yeh, I almost forget the nifty cross-referenced index which *isn't* available online. Even with all our access to computer tools and networked resources, the invaluable process and praxis of intelligent, efficient indexing probably won't be automated in the near future...

Electronic mailing lists cataloged within the *List Of Lists* run an incredible gamut of human endeavor. Topics stretch from 90120 (an overly self-absorbed TV show about Hollywood youth) to 9Nov89 (the day the Wall fell). Popular authors, obscure musicians and even un-

evermemes infect our minds, these will emerge as new lists - "And so forth." Email lists provide the most cost-effective form of journalism, publicity and publishing available today, and therefore have become, arguably, the most active attractors on the planet for human discourse and the accumulation of wisdom. Even the vaulted, penultimately democratic *Netnews* newsgroups inevitably C-O-S-T more from a user's perspective. However, if you already have *Netnews* on the computer system where you receive email, you can use it to read email lists more conveniently. Just have the system subscribe to your favorite list and gateway it into *Netnews* On Unix hosts, add the following line to the system alias file — `mail-address | inews local.newsgroup`

Other people on your host system can unsubscribe to the list, then read it as a newsgroup, and reduce mail traffic substantially. Submissions to moderated mailing lists can be routed just like any moderated newsgroup.

Mailing lists serve a brilliant purpose to accumulate knowledge and discourse, and offer a true example of free press in today's world.

tion overload -which can be mediated via better evolved tools- and three parts *interexperience*



-which is where we need to focus our adaptation to Internet and to each other.

So, back to the book, it'd make a nifty discussion piece for the coffee table, as great a temporary mental diversion as any other eclectic ref, and a wonderful gift for somebody new to Internet. — *Paco Xander Nathan*

1/e²

on the scope

DISSEMINATION NETWORK:
RAGE AND WONDERMENT
FROM A RADIOACTIVE TUBE

Start of the recent SXSW music fest in Austin... I ran into a gang of neoprimates in custom c-punk clothing: basic black, paramilitary gear with personalized symbols and tats. Twere casing our display at Europa Books so we started to talk: freshly arrived to play a SXSW pseudo-rave (where FWI was gonna vend brain toys) and desperately trying to keep from spending their cash en masse on back issues of <<O>>, 2600 and all the lovely DIY Laser Weapons texts.

Dissemination Network — DIS-NET: "a multi-media cyberpunk Tek-Know™ industrial assault from the high-tech underground." I said, "Oh yeh, my friend Gareth has told me all about you." (Well, I guess not; *Twas only a bit confused!*) I've spent a lot of time since that fateful night — poster-ing the streets, thrashing on dance floors, (un)loading toxic waste barrels full of equipment, watching record execs power-schmooze backstage, swigging Cold Colt and MD20/20 chasers in dark alleys, swapping survivalist catalogs, etc — with my new friends in DIS-NET.

By now you may have heard the ubiquitous (IMHO tired) addage that "Information wants to be free." Bullshit, freedom is a golden fleece on this planet; I doubt information would even recognize it... But you can be damn sure that "Information doesn't want to die" — just like most of the rest of us — or rather, "Information cannot be killed." When was the last time you *really* killed a piece of info?

To that end, band founder/manager Monte McCarter, aka DJ DMZ, confides that "copiers saved our lives" from the machinations of monster megacorps. His patent artform of cut-up, multi-gen, found-art montages — typically on screened xerox or low-res video/animation — creates a media extension for his origins in early rap: "scratching" for the eyes. His work represents deliberate, incessant attempts to suffocate/vivsect various kinds of information, which

fortunately doesn't seem to die. So instead the Net searches for important scoops, declassifications, then broadcasts these to the audience, disrobing critical subtext cloaked by infoglut. "It's our reaction to information overload, to sample the TV then send pieces of it back out as a message."

Monte started in mail art, seeking to change the world *just a little bit at a time*, by disseminating his mind-liberating cut-ups via business reply mail. He thought he'd brighten the lives of those poor people who must drudgingly open all our damn envelopes just to earn their rent and rice... which led to access TV production, soundtracks for videos, and eventually to a multi-media live show. Several megaseconds later Monte has this roving band of technoid artists/hoodlums, based outta sleepy Denton, Texas — near the massive FEMA subterranean complex. A few shows later, DIS-NET lands a showcase gig at the big international music fest in Austin, a kickass performance, and records execs' dirty little promises to do lunch.

"THIS IS INFORMATION"

TV monitors, searchlights and audio samples "front" the band, whilst DIS-NET's DNA-suits work like roadies in the dark: black clothes, headset comm, penlights, intent on production and not glam. Audience interacts with media machinery driven by performance artists; these three cyborganically form the actual "Dissemination Network" together. The stage is built from hazardous waste containers and TV sets, plus a flotsam of *gomi-no-sensei* post-structuralisms cordoned by yellow FDA biohazard warning tape.

Two synners run the frontline racks: CutMan, aka Greg Viazey — who also tends sequencers and mixing board, and provides octapad rhythms — and David Palmer, a massive, half-naked postmodern primitive who sweats and sways to the pure delight of staring young lovelies as he riffs on sampled vocals. Offline, Greg writes/

programs the music and David handles stage design and artwork.

DIS-NET videographer Larry Shelton plies an array of VCR's stuffed with B-rate movies, CNN combat/stock-ticker clips and custom 3D graphics — intentional multi-generational dubs to get that genuine, infodeluge-edge feel. Larry controls audience programming on a dozen crackling old TV sets by tickling an RShack vid-switch to deliver a montage that is never the same twice. My fave vid-scratch, to date, featured an evolutionary morph video: amoeba... multicellular... fish... shark... coelocanth... lizard... dinosaur... marmot... sloth... monkey... ape... human... then swiftly cut to an exquisite nuclear detonation.

A DISer named Switch, aka Thomas Salazar, assaults the audience with searchlights and strobes from the relative safety of a C3I command module custom built outta surplus Army mobile radar gear. Offline, Switch provides handles security during forays into industrial districts, piloting an armored van adorned with stickers from *Public Enemy* and *Front 242*. Meanwhile, DJ DMZ scratches vinyl and presses the flesh.

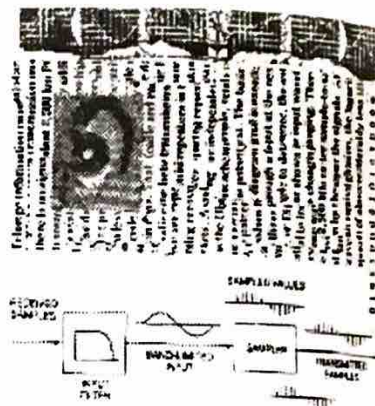
"BUT IS IT CYBERPUNK?"

DIS-NET's music is techno with a blend of rap and punk: they call it Tek-Know™ — which incidentally is NOT a *William-Shatner-meets-Tim-Leary* callback. C-punky vid artists who are funny and friendly and bright and twisted. There are no mics, there is not guitar. Imagine the movie *WAX* morphed with *Nine Inch Nails* in an upbeat, condensed, poignantly humorous format to which people enjoy dancing... Between songs, a "DIS-NET station identification" vid cuts in on the TV's — trademark biohazard logo spinning through static in 3D.

I watched a sordid audience of shit-kicking two-steppers and Fishbone hip-hoppers in what would normally

be a Top-40 dance club cautiously pour outta the woodwork to see and feel DIS-NET up close. The crowd was enthralled and each time DIS-NET's station ID popped on the tubes they instinctively responded, as if they'd just seen an APPLAUSE light flicker at a studio audience. What a brilliant, dangerous double-entendre to make a sociopolitical metaphor out of the audience itself.

"Who's in Authority here?" the sampled vocal screams... Can't help but recall Bob Black's remark that big-



time technophiles among the intelligentsia "Have always been unabashed authoritarians." Indeed, it seems popular dogma these days in Comm departments scattered across Academia that *more* technology in media will lead to stronger, *more centralized* forms of social control... They wish!

With people like DIS-NET around to put the *punk* back into *cyberpunk*, intelligentsia may have to come to terms with its own — our — humanity, while the rest of us keep dancing with our heads bobbing above the flooding sea of information. — Paco Xander Nathan

Dissemination Network
UNT Box 9826, Denton, TX 76203
+1 817 898 1659
+1 817 387 5824 fax
+1 817 566 5057 BBS

1/e²

MENSTAT—CYBORG MATRIX

CYBORGS. The body's evolving intimacy with the mutant machine, or in this case your own PC fed cyborganic code via *Menstat*, Sudona's software for fertility planning based on tracking and estimating menstrual cycles. The package includes two big chunks, *Menstat* and a HyperCard (or ToolBook) stack called *Menstack* which contains health info related, but not restricted, to menstrual and birthing cycles. *Menstat 1.0*, shareware created by Suzanne Nathan and Paco Xander Nathan, was a calendar hack for tracking menstrual cycles. The current version employs neural-net/fuzzy-logic tech to model cycles for more informed prediction.

Sudona is a small company whose serviceblurb sez "Desktop computing for women's health." *Menstat* is more than a "health" product, though; it merges high-tech machine intelligence with body consciousness for a cybernetic modeling of human rhythms to enhance the internal awareness which has been one focus of the women's movement — ala *Our Bodies, Our Selves*. We usually think of technology as alien to the body; this is anything but. There is a trend now, given the proliferation

take that as a disclaimer) as a micro reflection of a macro reality, the rhythms of lunar and Gaian cycles reflected in menstrual flows.

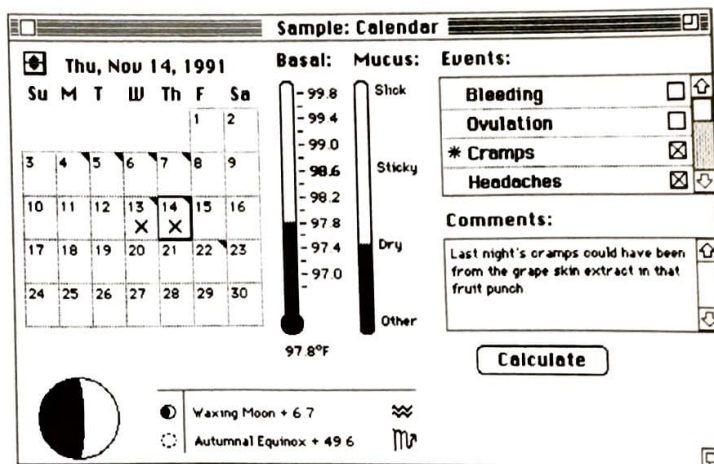
The program includes an optional ephemeris, so that you can coordinate the dance of the moon with the rhythms of your cycle. One beta tester returned the software with a shitstorm letter cranking about "new-age superstition," but Sudona sites research on the high correlation of lunar and menstrual cycles; logical and completely grounded, not woo-woo stuff. *Menstack* includes cool, carefully-researched info on herbs and their medicinal uses. There's also info on books, people, organizations, exercises and cultural celebrations related to bio-cycles.

Menstat associates its Calendar with a basal thermometer (fahrenheit or celsius), a mucus discharge "slider" or scale, and a list of events — bleeding and ovulation are core events, they can't be removed; other events can be added, such as cramps, headaches, heightened sexuality, etc. You can associate temperature, mucus discharge, and events with particular dates.

For a holistic view of menstrual cycles based on accumulated data, go to the Rhythms window, which

base of biomedical information. The body's biochemistry is regulated, systemically controlled, therefore to some extent cyclical. Sudona licenses a patent-pending tech that looks at waveform, time-dependent patterns, measuring

on individual patterns rather than textbook models. This technology may have other use in tracking both normal and pathological patterns. It might be used, for instance, to track diabetes or hypoglycemia. "The point is you get



these patterns, constructing and learning them as graphs. A neural net solution creates a comparison of graphed patterns to learn and estimate the individual's cycles.

Menstat was developed within a fascinating biotech context. One contributor, FWI's own Paco, views technology as "the ultimate human craft, a part of our nature. Here's a kind of technology that derives from a holistic, systemic

symbolic conditions in the body that correspond to a pattern of data, and that's where we're looking to be able to both learn and match biosignals."

Menstat and *Menstack* allow you to enter biomed information and personalize it, and use adaptive software technology to understand event correlations. The hypertext maintains context, pattern recognition translates between biorhythms and symbolic representation. This approach is certain to become an inherent part of the human-computer interface, as is community building and networking facilitated by interactive hypertext. Sudona has considered gathering data from users and integrating it for ongoing research which will tell us more about biotech patterns, and about how we can evolve our cyborganic realities while remaining true to human origins. — Jon Lebkowsky

See the Cyborganics product section for pricing info.

1/e²

"...merges high-tech machine intelligence with body consciousness for a cybernetic modeling of human rhythms to enhance internal awareness"

of "cyberculture" and the new myth of the cyborg, to perceive technology as an extension of mind/body/heart, an extension of essential human nature, a foundation for community.

"But I don't wanna think about my period," ya might say. "It's just not that big a deal." That's what one lady told me, anyway, but it's hard to imagine that this internal tide is "not a big deal." I'm seeing it (as a man, of course:

includes a bar chart of recorded cycles; a cycle chart of projected hormone fluctuations and event dates; and a timeline display, which shows daily events, temperature and mucus readings per cycle. If you enter your birth date and activate the lunar calendar, you can track correlations with lunar cycles based on the particular phase of the moon when you were born.

Menstat combines several cool tools for keeping a personal data-

view of brain dynamics. The pattern matching technology involves modeling dynamic synapse behavior, really taking a look at the biochemistry, what's going on with the calcium ions, right down to that level." Sudona employed an adaptive recognition technology (from Odin Corporation of Manhattan, Kansas) that will learn an individual's patterns, many different cases per individual user, and base biomedical prediction

de-classifieds

THIS
SPACE
FOR
RENT...

*you can pretty much bet you won't see
a cheesy bottle of vodka here instead*

REACH
THE
FRINGE

WHAT CAN WE SAY?!? You've just got too many options... Used to be the case that only a select few could engineer memes on a mass scale: hermetic adepts, religious leaders, comedians, writers, monks, etc. But ever since that guy Gutenberg or Niftytown or Birkenstocks or whomever it was that claimed to have invented the printing press, geez, everybody's gotten into the act...

Check up on just about any meme you can think of these days and watch how its poor little lifeblood of human attention has been throttled out of its neck by *Infoglut* as our species races headlong toward *Singularity*. Er, uh, okay, think about all the memes except the ones about "Infoglut", "Singularity", and drawing questionable similes between virtual life forms and DNA based processes... Okay, where were we?!?

Oh yeh, so if you wanna help spread a meme, then consider *Fringe Ware Review*. A simple advert here will reach thousands of people who are nearly as strange and twisted as yourself. Some of them will be likely to agree with what you're doing and send money or underwear or whatever it is that you're gonna request... So go ahead, take out an advert here. Contact FWI for rates.

Of course, if you're cheap or as poor as our editors, you can take out a few lines in the *De-Classifieds* section. First come, first serve — until we fill the one page set aside each issue — subject to our editors' X-acto knives. Only costs US\$0.05 per word and only available to people who are current subscribers. Speaking of which, look inside the front cover for subscription rates and contact info... **WASH WARM, TUMBLE DRY!!**

T H O M A S M I C A L

Address: 2881 Cocklebur Trail / Decatur, GA 30034 / USA

Telephone: (404) 288-6806

FringeWare Inc.
2507 Roehampton
Austin, TX 78745-6964

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently teaching at the Georgia Institute of Technology's College of Architecture, and this coming fall I will be teaching a course on the relation between body and space in the construct of cyberspace and virtual reality (it will most likely be cross-listed with the literature program, where that sort of course is more common). In pursuing research along this topic, I discovered reference to your book service from a thesis student who is a member of Future Culture bbs.

I am in the process of assembling a course reader and required texts, and I would like to perhaps have a list of relevant texts or products for consideration (and possibly for purchase orders).

I suspect this coming summer will be the first summer I will not go to Tokyo to design, unless I get a grant, and I am looking for a research vessel in these areas of interest for future research/publications...if you have any other suggestions, feel free to dash off a few lines.

I hope you can make time to respond to this curious letter, and I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Thomas Mical

Prof. Thomas Mical

B Des (Hons.), M Arch (Harvard), M Sc., Ph D. candidate
Doctoral Teaching Fellow, Georgia Institute of Technology
Design Intern, Dr. Taketomi Aida and Associates (Tokyo, Japan)

Governmedia Neocortechonologies Inc.

+01 908 758 20000 x5494

*taking over the planet,
one retina at a time!*



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technolocaust thereforists uncontraalien yourpose

FRINGE WARE REVIEW

+1 818 980 2009

— <name withheld>, president and CEO, Schwa Corporation

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LYWpN

A circular sign with a diagonal slash through it, indicating a prohibition. Inside the circle, there is a stylized figure of a person standing and smoking a cigarette. This is a common symbol for 'No Smoking'.

Shipping rates apply only in the US; double all shipping rates on international orders. Call before placing interplanetary orders. Texas residents add 8% sales tax. Listings supersede any previous FWI price list. All products subject to availability; we reserve the right to drop any product at any time. Our vendors are fringeful, many run their wares in small infrequent runs, so orders may take weeks to get delivered, but we won't cash your check until we start shipping the order. We don't do credit cards, purchase orders, C.O.D., toll-free numbers, non-profit organizations, consignment, product marketing or wholesale. We are not a big company, we travel frequently, get deluged with strange requests, etc., so it may take several days for us to respond even to intelligible inquiries, but we will sincerely try. If you have questions about products or placing an order.

+ 1 5 1 2 4 7 7 1 3 6 6
fringeware@wixer.bga.com

bur-geon (bûr'jen) *v.i.* **1.** To flourish; grow. — *v.t.* **2.** To put forth. — *n.* **3.** A bud. Also spelled *bourgeon*. [*< OF burjon*]

Hey Bud! FWI needs products to burgeon (bludgeon?) this catalog into its next prigoginic level!! **We** buy directly from most of our suppliers —from the dark, festering enclaves of today's most fringeiful artisans and inventors, scattered about the planet... Wouldn't you, if you **needed** to ware our pairs of ConverseAllStars? OK, then. Put forth your best, most twisted wares, gizmos and productions, 'cuz we're gonna merchandize! If your **products** are right, we can get you exposure and review thru mail order, retail outlets, online services, vendor tables at conferences, raves and alien encounters, etc. Our competitors will charge you too much for distribution —monstrous megacorp software disti's often demand up to 70% cuts, even before compulsory advertising **from** within their publications. We simply hope that you produce good, strange wares at reasonable rates. Basically, understand that They want you to become an employee of sorts. We don't want you to become our employee, because we don't want any employees and besides we already found out about that time **you** cheated on a Math quiz. So get busy —er, uh, not working, of course! —otherwise we'll tell your former Math teacher about the quiz and you'll get sent back and have to experience puberty all over again... Geez, instead let's go rake in ca\$h doing fun things! We also need writers and artists; we'll even pay them, **too!** "OK, but just what does that funny word prigoginic mean anyways?" you ask...



Day Dreamer

..by Alpha Odysseys
\$14⁹⁵ + \$2⁹⁵ ship
GROK-01

Made from purple plastic, this device vaguely resembles a diving mask... perfect for your next dive into the *Neuroverse*! You look toward the nearest star with eyes closed, then blow into a tube with long, deep breaths, which causes the device's inner disk to rotate. Strobed natural light on closed eyelids produces photic stimulation, which combines with paced breathing for a wonderfully vivid, kaleidoscopic experience. *Simply the most intense brain machine available for the cost/performance* — so long as you have sunlight and breath to invest in clearing your mental cobwebs... Called "the LSD flight simulator" by Timothy Leary. Kelly Green of AlphaOdysseys has been nominated for the **1993 Best Grey-Matter Gizmo** award by FWI.



Esprit ESP-1
..by Synetic Systems
\$99⁹⁵ + \$3⁹⁵ ship
GROK-02

Pocket-sized brain machine, which FWI uses for rentals at raves & clubs. Six built-in programs range from 10 to 30 min, in Alpha, Theta and Beta states. Powered by 4 AA batteries. A *best buy* these days in terms of price, performance and durability.

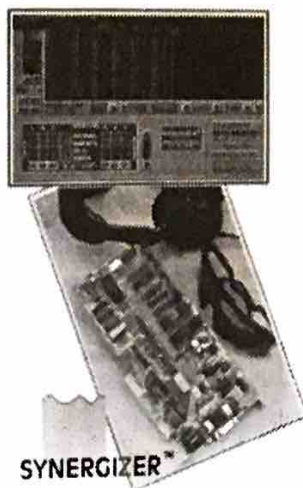
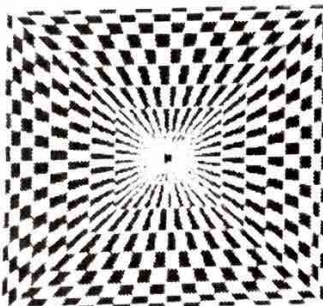


MasterMind DLS
..by Synetic Systems
\$199⁹⁵ + \$3⁹⁵ ship
GROK-03

A very popular mid-range, pocket-sized brain machine with more extensive controls beyond the *Esprit*. External audio input, built-in NiCad batteries and recharger.

MasterMind DLS w/ PolySync
..by Synetic Systems
\$249⁹⁵ + \$0⁹⁵ ship
GROK-04

Same as MasterMind DLS, but can download new sequences from cassettes & CD's, with programs developed by experts...



Synergizer
..by Synetic Systems
\$475⁹⁵ + \$0⁹⁵ ship
GROK-05

Add-in card + software for any IBM PC clone. Great graphical interface for designing brain machine sessions up to 10 hrs or 300 segments long. This is where all brain-machines are headed. *Why buy extra gizmos — use your PC as a custom brain machine?*



Mind Mirror
..by KnoWare
\$19⁹⁵ + \$1⁹⁵ ship
GROK-06

"ThoughtWare for Mind-tool or Mind-play" from Timothy Leary. Autographed manual, DOS color psych self-analysis, 5.25 disk.



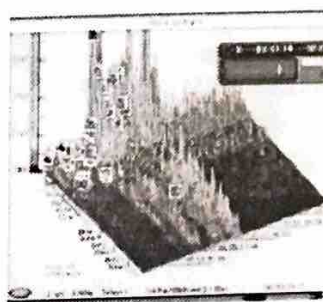
Digital Psychic
..by Jeff Posey
\$14⁹⁵ + \$0⁹⁵ ship
GROK-07

DOS software for digital seances. "Requires VGA graphics, mouse and a relaxed state of mind." Stonehenge pix for your visual/psychic pleasure. If you've ever used a Ouija board, then you know what to do...



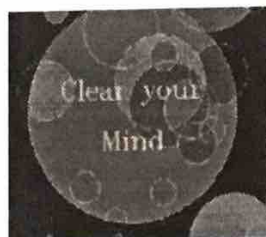
IBVA
..by Psychic Lab Inc.
\$995⁹⁵ + \$0⁹⁵ ship
GROK-08

Interactive Brainwave Analyzer system. A sensor head band radio-xmits signals to a state of the art EEG system for the Mac. 3D FFT software provides visual analysis in real-time and translates brain modalities into MIDI events, graphic animation, RS-422 control signals, etc., for brain wave controlled multimedia and VR. See review in *Mondo 2000* #7.



IBVA, 2-Channel Upgrade
..by Psychic Lab Inc.
\$1115⁹⁵ + \$0⁹⁵ ship
GROK-09

Upgrade kit to allow for two IBVA systems to be used in tandem. Tag-team EEG play with a grokbuddy, or use two head bands to analyze left/right brain EEG simultaneously.



Reduce Stress
Stop Smoking
..by David's Designs Software
\$29⁹⁵ + \$3⁹⁵ ship
GROK-10

DOS software which tracks your circadian rhythms, asks psych profile questions for color prefs, adjective pairs, melody prefs, etc. Then run sessions during your calculated "down" times — as a psychoactive screen saver — to nix stress. The second title uses similar techniques to reduce your urge to smoke.

cyborganics

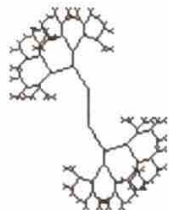
Tierra Simulator 4.0

..by Virtual Life

\$63⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship

BORG-01

The Artificial Life simulator which blew the lid off modern computing. Written by Alife aficionado Tom Ray, the Tierra package includes DOS executables and installation, along with source code for DOS and Unix. See articles, talks by Steven Levy for great discussions about Tierra. True, you *could* just download the source code from Tom's FTP site, iff you have (1) good Internet access (2) a few spare Mbytes for incoming FTP, (3) understand Unix tools like *uncompress* and *tar*, (4) lots-o space time to kill trying to get the Turbo C code to run... This package is what Tom sells for people who aren't programmers, since Tierra executables are prohibited from distribution.



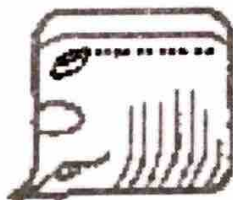
Blind Watchmaker

..by WW Norton

\$9⁹⁵ + \$1⁰⁰ ship

BORG-02

Evolutionary "biomorph" software for DOS or Macintosh, based on the Richard Dawkins book. We use these ALife wares to illustrate zines; some of them sprinkle about these very pages. Tis a nifty, low-cost intro package that animates lessons about modern evolutionary theory.



Mayan Calendrics

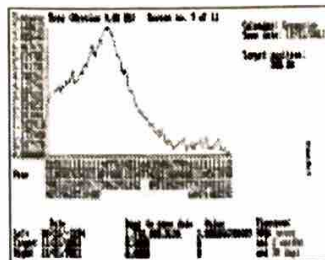
..by Dolphin Software

\$64⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship

BORG-03

An academic tour-de-force written for exploring correlations between Maya and Western calendric dates. Allows for various hypotheses about the Maya calendar... Not long ago it was 12.18.19.9.6 in the Tikal system using correlation number 584,283, also called 1 Cimi 9 Yax, which PC anthropologists would call 13 Oct 92 CE, and agreed by

most modern astronomers to be Julian day number 2,448,909. BTW, this provides an *interesting* way to encode a sequence of numbers one might care to protect...



Timewave Zero

..by Dolphin Software

\$64⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship

BORG-04

Hexagram #49: "The magician is the one who makes the calendar." Tis high time for an *archaic revival*: this DOS software illustrates Terence McKenna's theoretical work on Novelty, Time, and the end of history, i.e. Singularity. "A precision instrument for exploring the theory of time as a fractal wave derived from the King Wen Sequence of I Ching Hexagrams. Based on extraterrestrial communications..."



MENSTAT

Menstat 2.0

..by Sudona

\$99⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship

BORG-05

Fertility planning software for Macintosh, which uses neural nets to adapt to an individual's patterns. Easy to use graphical interface, lunar calendar, herbalism hypertext database, and extended documentation as a health text. Check out Susie Bright's review in *Future Sex* #2.

NOTE: All Sudona products (Menstat, etc.) are available to students at a 50% discount through Sep 31, 1993... Please include a copy of your school ID with your order (you can blot out the actual numbers for privacy)... "What? You burned your ID after finals?!"



Menstat 3.0

..by Sudona

\$39⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship

BORG-06

Fertility planning software for Macintosh (and soon for DOS too!) Lunar calendar. Less features than version 2.0, unbundled from hypertext database and the extended documentation.



Menstack

..by Sudona

\$39⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship

BORG-07

Online hypertext resource database that works in along with Menstat. For Windows (ToolBook) or Macintosh (HyperCard 2.x). Herbalism, exercises, references, definitions. Made to be customized by the user.



EnviroAccount

..by EnviroAccount Software

\$27⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship

BORG-08

A new software package for DOS or Macintosh that runs environmental impact analysis for individuals and gives a score ranging from *Eco-Titan* to *Eco-Tyrannosaurus rex*. Covers most of what you do "in excruciating detail."



SimLife

..by Maxis

\$59⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship

BORG-09

Alife software for Macintosh, presented as a "video game" and very entertaining — in the same vein as the popular *SimEarth* and *SimAnt* titles... Design your beasts then let 'em frolic in a virtual world. Visualize Mona Lisa Overdrive vacationing on *The Island of Dr. Moreau*.



Xochi Speaks

..by Lord Nose!

\$24⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship

BORG-10

Full-color poster of Xochipilli, Aztec god of Flowers (wink, wink) with 16-page *Guide to the Psychedelics Mondo 2000* #7 sez: "Very neatly and artistically fills an educational niche." Info on taxonomy, cross tolerance, nutritional support, etc., partly excerpted in the public domain *Xochi Stack* for Hypercard.

d.i.y. tech



PowerGlove

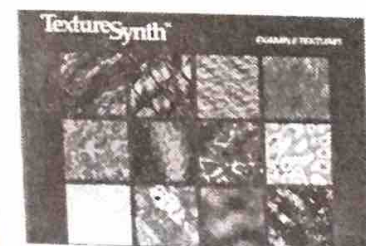
..by Mattel

\$inquire

GZMO-01

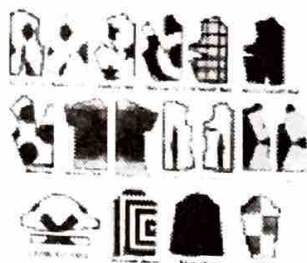
Mattel's ultra low-end VR device, based on the famous VPL *DataGlove*, for 3D input to your computer. Used & new models — subject to availability.

Macintosh software (*GoldBrick*) & hardware (*Nugget*) that translates game peripherals to substitute for the mouse. Includes Hypercard stack for 3D input and C source to write your own drivers. Mattel PowerGlove, Nintendo Zapper, Brotherbund Uforce, etc. Powered from ADB port.



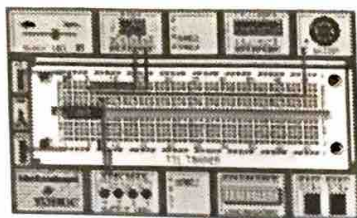
TextureSynth
..by Pantech
\$149⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-03

Mac software for a visual image synthesizer that creates incredible color textures. Give your virtual landscapes computer generated textures that look creepily real. Check out review in *Mondo* 2000 #6



PC Patterns
..by Water Fountain Software
\$150⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-04

DOS software to edit & print libraries of custom clothing patterns. US sizes 8-48 included; custom measurements can be saved & edited



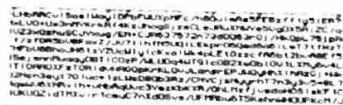
MacBreadboard
..by YOERIC Software
\$59⁹⁵ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-05

A Mac-based TTL trainer simulator, comes with sample circuits and a 50 page manual. Pre-packaged simulations based on 78 different TTL chips. Wonderful graphics. Check Dec 92 issue of *MacWorld* - received a 4 star review



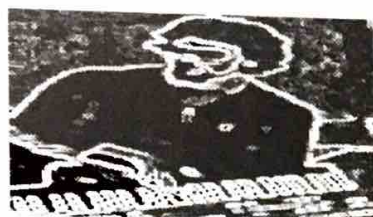
Nosy & The Debugger
..by Jasik Designs
\$349⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-06

Symbolic, hypertext-based debugger & disassembler for Macintosh, which special support for THINK-C and MPW. Perfect for pulling apart just about any software.



Dolphin Encrypt
..by Dolphin Software
\$64⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-07

DOS software for personal encryption based on a public domain version of the RSA encryption algorithm — an alternative to public key systems. Works on entire directory structures. Source code available for an additional fee.



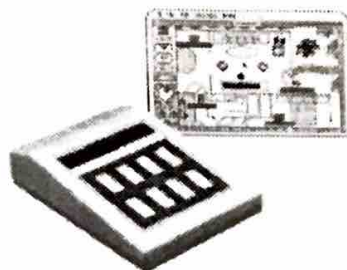
FRED13
..by Robitron Software
\$199~~95~~ + \$3~~00~~ ship
GZMO-08

Natural language one-liner dialog generator AI. Used for the "FRED13" topic

of the *mondo* conference on The WELL.
DOS or Unix. Call about source license.

FRED13 demo
..by Robitron Software
\$43⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-09

Same as above but doesn't learn new phrases; has 12000 phrase/response records, enough to hold a pretty loose conversation. Great for intelligent agents on a BBS.



X-10 CPU Interface
..by X-10 Home Controls Inc.
\$65⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
GZMO-10

Controls lighting, appliances, security, etc. by sending signals over existing house wiring and/or infrared and radio transceivers.

Model CP290 connects to the serial port of a Mac or PC. Bundled software can pre-set up to 128 timed events on up to 256 modules using multiple schedule files, then the unit disconnects from the computer. Mac version uses PICTs and icons to represent maps of your home.

Dozens of X-10 peripherals are available, ranging from motion detectors to telephone transponders which dial multiple numbers in your voice... Connecting cable included.

**X-10 Powerhouse Modules
..by X-10 Home Controls Inc.**

X-10 tech descends from a long, hal-
lowed line of hobbyist/consumer
products which allow computers to control
household appliances, via the serial
port and event timer peripherals. The
nifty part about these gizmos is (1) they
run off existing electrical wires, so no
additional wiring is required, (2) the
controller runs unplugged from the com-
puter, so it won't tie up your PC, (3)
they're reliable and reasonably priced,
and (4) you can build all kinds of sys-
tems... X-10 has become a facto
standard for low-cost *smart home* de-
velopment, there's even Internet mailing
list...

The following list has standard modules and post-paid prices... We can generally get any current module in the X-10 line, and we'll work with you on package prices — give us a call or send email. Remember to specify part-numbers with your order:

- AM466 3 Pin Appliance Module
\$16⁹⁹
- AM486 2 Pin Appliance Module
\$15⁹⁹
- DW534 Door/Window Sensor
\$18⁹⁹
- HD243 15a 220v Appliance Module
\$23⁹⁹
- HD245 20a 220v Appliance Module
\$23⁹⁹
- HT544 Remote Control
\$23⁹⁹
- KF574 Key Chain Remote Control
\$23⁹⁹
- LM465 Lamp Module
\$15⁹⁹
- SL757 Screw In Lamp Module
\$23⁹⁹
- SP554 Wireless Motion Detector
\$55⁹⁹
- TH2807 Thermostat Setback
\$28⁹⁹
- TR551 Telephone Responder
\$74⁹⁹
- UM506 Universal Module
\$23⁹⁹
- WS467 Wall Switch Module
\$15⁹⁹

**m e l t - o -
m e d i a**



The demons had their hen-pecking party—sucked him off in the psychiatric ward. Now slimy, cankerous white-trash hovered over his brain. It could only get worse once the hens started pecking.

Ambulance

..by Electronic Hollywood
\$14²⁵ + \$0⁷⁵
MELT-01

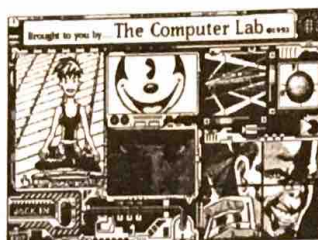
Sound-tracked horror novel of five LA post-collegiate twenty-something posers. *"Upon John's release from rehab, they crash their car in a deserted stretch of Hollywood Hills and get picked up by a serial killer masquerading as an am-*

balance driver." Non-linear story by Monica Moran lets you chose doors, windows to alter the plot. Hypertext links for plot clues and mind-wrenching animation by Jaime Levy (author of the recent *Billy Idol's Cyberpunk* disk), artwork by Jaime Hernandez of *Love and Rockets*, soundtrack by Mike Watt. Requires: Mac w/ 6.0.7 or later, 2 Mb RAM, shipped on 1.4 Mb floppy. Jaime Levy of Electronic Hollywood has been nominated for the **1993 Best Melt-O-Malto Media** award by FWI.



Cyber Rag II
Cyber Rag III
Electronic Hollywood I
Electronic Hollywood II
..by Electronic Hollywood
\$5⁹⁹ each + \$0²³ ship
MELT-02

Mac electronic publications from premiere techno-punk electronic zinester Jaime Levy. *Mondo 2000* #7: "Angst animations, premenstrual poetry, ram-bunctious reviews, seductive sound samples" as well as subversive info for all. Started out as a student project that frankly just took over. Electronic muchomedia with cutting insight, captivating production and a severe attitude! Each issue editorializes the frustrations of big city life from a Post-Boomer POV as La Editrix wanders from NYC to SF to LA to NYC to SF to LA to...



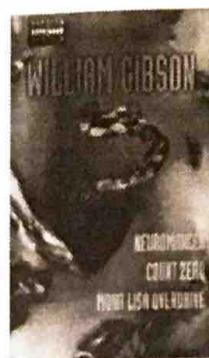
Beyond Cyberpunk! v1.5
..by The Computer Lab
\$32⁹⁹ + \$2⁹⁹ ship
MELT-03

Attention Citizen! New Update! Multi-media tour-de-force of art, literature, thought and practice in a postmodern/cyberpunk genre. "Like scuba diving in an Encyclopedia." Requires HyperCard 2.x: coolest stack on the planet. Peter Sugarman, Gareth Branwyn, Mark Frauenfelder, Bruce Sterling, Richard Kadrey, Paul Di Filippo, Steve Brown, Hakim Bey, Rudy Rucker and even other famous people working under pseudonyms, all cross linked via hypertext with industrial sound track, animation clips, digital book marks and a dictionary that pronounces its terms. "You must open your eyes, ears, and minds to the river of information that is growing exponentially... in raging turbulence... beyond anyone's ability to comprehend... you may find yourself washed up onto an alien shore someday, and you'd better be ready."



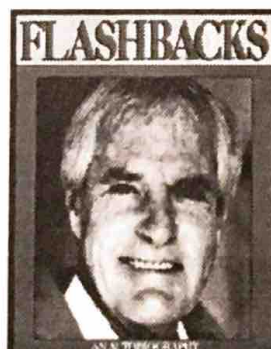
Comic Book Confidential
..by The Voyager Company
\$39⁹⁹ + \$1⁹⁹
MELT-06

Historical footage, interviews & animations on 22 of the most influential comic artists and writers. Get the inside scoop on Zippy, Maus, MAD, RAW, Jack Kirby, Lynda Barry, etc. Requires: any Mac w/ 4 Mb RAM, System 6.0.7 or later w/ color monitor, QuickTime compatible CD-ROM drive.



Expanded Books:
Neuromancer, Count Zero,
Mona Lisa Overdrive
The Complete Annotated Alice
The Tao Of Pooh, The Te Of Piglet
Jurassic Park
The Complete Hitchhiker's
Guide to the Galaxy
Genius: Life & Science of R. Feynman
Jurassic Park (w/ sounds)
Amusing Ourselves To Death,
Brave New World, etc.
Asimov Complete Stories #1
..by The Voyager Company
\$17⁹⁹ each + \$1⁹⁹ ship
MELT-05

Mac software for electronic versions of popular novels with illustrations, sounds, hypertext links, digital bookmarks and even hidden extras in the stories. Run word and phrase searches, add margin comments and end notes, highlight text, etc. "Electronic text is a dynamic medium that enables you to become a more active reader." Requires: System 6.0.7 or later w/ 31 cm or larger monitor, HyperCard 2.1, 1.4 Mb disks.



Flashbacks
..by KnoWare
\$12⁹⁹ + \$1⁹⁹ ship
MELT-06

"A Personal & Social History of an Era." Online version of Timothy Leary's autobiography, with foreword by William S. Burroughs. "Part man, part myth; part knight, part dragon."

memes 'r us.



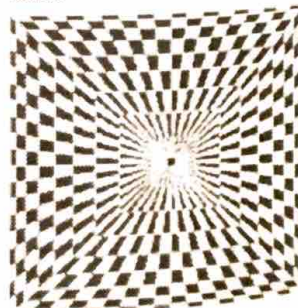
2600 T-shirts
..by 2600 magazine
\$12⁹⁹ + \$3⁹⁹ ship
MEME-01

White illo of the original Blue Box circuit diagram on black cotton cloth. XL size only. Captions sez: "This is what started it all..."



Kata Sutra T-shirts
..by BOING-BOING magazine
\$12⁹⁹ + \$3⁹⁹ ship
MEME-02

Kata Sutra logo with mind-bomb. Join the neo-wobblies in their great neuronautical adventures against the GIC! Black on white cloth. "Get Illuminated!"

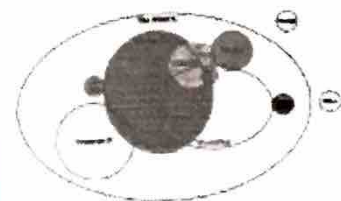


FRINGE WARE REVIEW



DIS NET T-shirts
..by Dissemination Network
\$10⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
MEME-03

Biohazard/radiation symbol with "This is information" from Texas' premier Tek-Know™ muse/vid artists. White on black cloth. XL size only. Designs may mutate over time.



Matrix News T-shirts
..by Matrix Information and Delivery Services, Inc.
\$22⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
MEME-04

Color computer graphic representation of the Matrix of computer networks interconnecting Planet Earth. Global net demographics hand screened in a seven layer full color design on white cloth. XL size only



2600 Panties
..by 2600 magazine (sorta)
\$7⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-05

Geez, 2600 magazine dumped a huge box of their shirts on us, including mediums. No self-respecting hacker would ever wear a medium shirt... So we did what we had to — we cut up our excess inventory and made 'em into women's bikini undies. Same illo as the shirts; could be illegal to wear in some states. Specify size: L, M, S or give custom measurements. So you're a hacker, huh? Just try to hack your way into these!



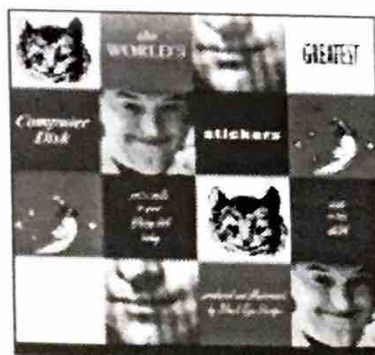
Machine Screws
..by FringeWare Inc.
\$1⁰⁰ per sheet + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-06

Stickers with a machine screw logo, approx. 5 cm square. Just about the same size as those ubiquitous "I Heart <whatever>" stickers. You know what to do. 12 stickers per sheet.

Just Say Know

Just Say Know
..by KnoWare
\$2⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-07

"The Eternal Antidote to Fascism" bumper sticker from Timothy Leary's KnoWare company.



World's Greatest Computer Disk Stickers
..by Black Eye Designs
\$2⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-08

That's right, these are really great: the world's greatest computer stickers. Packet has 12 diskette labels, each with color artwork, infoblurbs and plenty of space left over for labeling your bytes. Two collections: dinosaurs with cool facts about each monster lizard shown, and another with plenty of smiles: Cheshires, Laurels, Moons and Mona Lisas, each with a nifty literary quote. Specify style collection with your order.



Schwa T-shirts
..by Schwa
\$14⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰
MEME-09

"Remain where you are!" Alien detector on front pocket and abduction instructions will keep you safe at all times. Black on white cotton with birth + school + love + work + church + abduction illo on back. XL size only. "Not for the squeamish."



Complete Schwa Kit

..by Schwa
\$15⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
MEME-10

"All the basic equipment for alien defense in one simple kit!" A brilliantly terrifying tale of alien abduction, told in a book that contains only symbols and illustrations. Kit also includes alien invasion survival keychain, cards, stickers, etc. F5 sez: "Whitney Schrieber alien rapture conspiracy virus attack! Suicide = redemption = money." A perfect intro text for surveying the stealth landscape of paranoia, alienation and disappearance. "Stay awake!"



Alien Invasion Survival Card
..by Schwa
\$1⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-11

"Identify aliens instantly with the amazing Xenon coated identifier" on a keychain. Includes: abduction rangefinder, lost time detector, abduction rules, saucer viewer, etc. Includes a peephole so that you can see what happens when they don't think you are watching.



Every Picture Tells A Lie
..by Schwa
\$1⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-12

5 cm alien head sticker with "Every Picture Tells A Lie" motto. Help shape the future!



Drug War Sticker
..by Digit Press
\$1⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-13

Does the Drug War make you see red? Bumper sticker reads "The Drug War" - white letters on a Stop-Sign red background, 9 by 33 cm. Stop sign not included.



Hemp Rubber Stamp
..by Digit Press
\$3⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MEME-14

George Washington grew hemp. You're not allowed to grow hemp, but you carry hundreds of pictures of George in your pocket every year. Stamp reads "I Grew Marijuana."

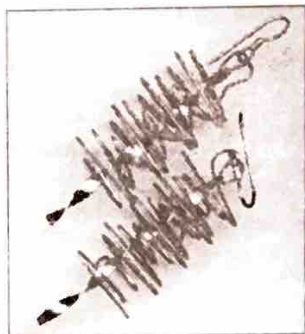
FRINGE WARE REVIEW



Space/Time Fabric Hats

..by Rolling Thunder
\$12⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-01

Reversible patchwork floppy hats with recycled electronics buttons, and the esteemed FWI label. People will think you speak another language, regardless of where you go. Custom orders for fabric colors/motifs at no extra charge.



Texas Twisters
..by Vernon Reed
\$24⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-02

A pair of cyborganic, kinetic sculptures for the ears. Twin helical vortices (can you say DNA?) fabricated in ultralight, ultrastrong titanium. Electro-oxidized in iridescent colors, fading from fuchsia to emerald. Inside each vortex is a swinging, twisted ribbon of gold-colored titanium. 2 cm wide by 6 cm long.



1:46



Circuit Board Clipboard
..by Tecnotes
\$11⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-03

33 by 24 cm clipboard made from recycled circuit boards. Colors and designs vary with sources.

Circuit Board Binder
..by Tecnotes
\$12⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-04

30 by 24 cm 3-ring binder, with steel polyhinge. Made from recycled circuit boards. Colors and designs vary with sources.



DIS NET Necklace
..by Dissemination Network
\$3⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-05

Nifty neophile necklace constructed out of used electronic parts with the use of a sledge hammer. Includes a day-glo DIS NET logo. "Be careful, this could be somebody's Motherboard."



'Warewear Earrings
'Warewear Broaches
'Warewear Tie Tacks
..by Chiphead
\$5⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
CHIP-06

Computer chips recycled into jewelry. Earrings come in three designs: dangling on hooks, piercing on posts, and

"puncture" (pierced with leads cut to look like chip is implanted in your ear lobe). Add \$2 for windowed EPROM.



Sterling Cigarette Holders
..by Rolling Thunder
\$25⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
CHEM-01

Rat bastards have nearly outlawed all the fun — you can't even find a decent gonzo cigarette holder anymore... So FWI asked to have a new line fabricated: sterling silver, just like Dr. HST employs. 15 cm long, beveled lip. Specify polished or oxidized — "Tasty" sez PXN, with a mumbled and slightly paranoid expression.



Pomo Art Mugs
..by Jeff Gorvetzian
\$14⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
CHEM-02

Dose your hourly caffeine fix using a handy post-modern mug. Enscribed with: "I deconstructed the spacetime continuum... in my Maidenform bra!" and accompanying pomo artwork. One size fits all, they're refillable. FWI's nomination for the 1993 Sub-Substance Abuse Award goes to Jeff Gorvetzian, because we drink coffee with him...

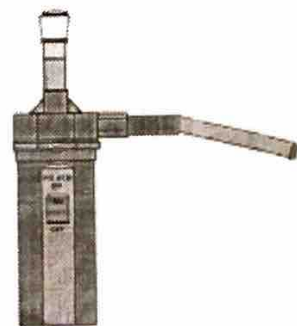


Polar Bear Snuff
..by Devonshire Apothecary
\$5⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
CHEM-03

White powder concoction of many "legal" stimulants that will probably keep you awake — depending in what you've been doing... Stronger than Jolt Cola.

Go For It
..by Devonshire Apothecary
\$5⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
CHEM-04

Herbal formula which helps keep you awake, like PB Snuff, but feeling less "edgy."



Power Pipe
..by Lightspeed Electronics, Inc.
\$30⁰⁰ + \$2⁰⁰ ship
CHEM-05

Imagine having a small vacuum cleaner work in reverse to smoke your TOBACCO for you! Just flip the switch a moment and enjoy the lovely smokes. Many who use this claim they'll never go back to manual pipes again!



Moving Eyeball Pipes ..by Impakt Studio \$15⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship CHEM-06

One-of-a-kind, glow-in-the-dark pipes with brass interiors and removable parts. Rainbow patterns and moving eyeballs, highlighted with white glowing features. Custom work at available on request; prices depend on requested work. You see double, your pipe sees triple, quadruple, quintuple...



Smart-Assed Foods ..by Colonel Kernel \$5⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship CHEM-07

Horribly stale popcorn with obnoxious salty coating. Shipped in airline puke bags. Some people care about their consumers, these people are just smart-asses. Not for human consumption.

game - thingz



Hacker ..by Steve Jackson Games \$17⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship PLAY-01

The United States Secret Service wanted SJG's upcoming GURPS Cyberpunk game book so badly, they violated several Fed laws just to seize it... (Shows you how much time they spent protecting G. Bush's life.) This board game was written as a satire of the SS ordeal — similar to the popular *Illuminati*, but with a lot of Jolt Cola and monster modems mixed in... Boot up your Hackintosh and watch out for your alleged friends. Fnord.

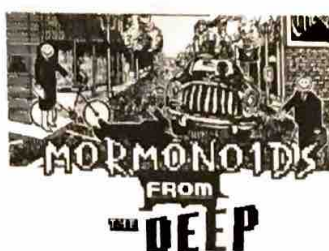
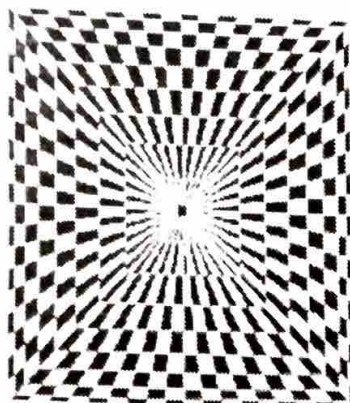
FRINGE WARE REVIEW



MacJesus

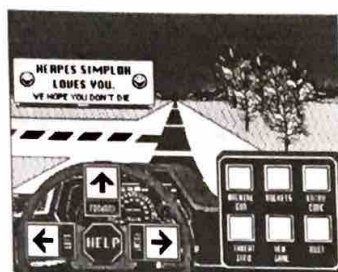
..by Smurfs In Hell
\$9⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
PLAY-02

"Your personal Saviour on a floppy disk." Claims to help give you "an inside track when dealing with the Creator Of The Universe." An interactive mano-a-mano with that special avatar, for personal evaluation and advice. Based on Hypercard 1.2 - with special thanx to Miss Fifi LaRoue for "helping write the really dirty stuff." Robert Carr of *Smurfs In Hell Productions* has been nominated for the **1993 Most Fringe-ful Character** award by FWI... If we were playing ball, Robert would be the all-time MVP. There may be others nominated this year, or even in the following years, but *none* will ever match the personal diligence to which Robert has pursued the inherent strangeness of the *Humanoid Condition*.



Mormonoids From The Deep
..by Smurfs In Hell
\$9⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
PLAY-03

A 2 disk set for one of the best adventure games on the Mac, depending on your tastes: you have a .45, a nuclear detonator, a rapidly waning collection of beers as lifeblood and you're stuck in a small, sociopathic Mormon town in northern Utah. What do you do next?



MacSpudd!
..by Smurfs In Hell
\$12⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
PLAY-04

In the closing days of the 20th century, a major portion of the world's oil reserves were accidentally destroyed during a limited nuclear exchange between South Yemen and Liechtenstein. Alas, a French firm named Herpes Simplex now converts potatoes into ethanol, giving rise to the wealth and relative danger of life in Celibate Idaho. Come on, be a hero... Mac, 2 disks.



PornoWriter
..by Smurfs In Hell
\$4⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
PLAY-05

Adults only! "Sick, drugs, immorality, perversion - garbage lifestyles!" Hey, why let Xavier Hollander have all the fun? With this Mac software, you too can generate all those languid texts found between the glossy sheets. Ultra cool sound f/x.



Sexotica
..by Dragon's Eye Productions
\$39⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
PLAY-06

Adults only! Sexotica #1 is the first in a series of erotic electronic literature (DOS) from Dragon's Eye. Illustrated with amazing amounts of VGA color by 'Manda D. Original music scores play on most sound cards (optional). Sales lit sez: "Not merely 'erotic' but passionate, graphic stuff, arousing both to women and men. We mean it! We've really put the 'personal' into 'personal computing'." 2.5 Mb on disk.

Note-A-Bennie: Many of our games are in fact commonly available in shareware versions, but **these** versions are the full thang with extra goodies and gizmos available. And if a product is marked "**Adults Only!**" then you're ordered to include a photocopy of your adult "proof-of-age" with your order in order to purchase your order in good order...

ink globs & muses



Unshaved Truths #2
..by FringeWare Inc.
\$5⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
UNTR-02

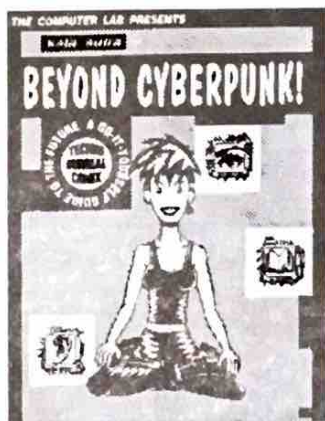
Fictionoids, Essays & Reviews, Crazy Wisdom. Features: *Cyberstroika!* by

oni, *Diary of a Programmer* by C.A. Rumbaut, *The Good Law* by Wendy Wheeler, and many more.



Unshaved Truths #3
..by FringeWare Inc.
\$4⁰⁰ + \$1⁰⁰ ship
UNTR-03

"Austin's foremost contribution to zine kulchur..." Gonzo fiction & high weirdness featuring: Don Webb, Wendy Wheeler, Peter Meyer, Carlos Rumbaut, Blade X, Jerod Pore, Robert Glenn, PXN and more! Edited by Jon Lebkowsky



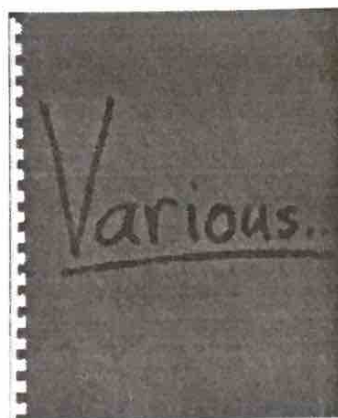
Beyond Cyberpunk! comix
..by The Computer Lab
\$1⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
ZINE-01

Kata Sutra's continuing cyber-heroine sagas in NeoWobblie Land by Mark Frauenfelder and Gareth Branwyn.



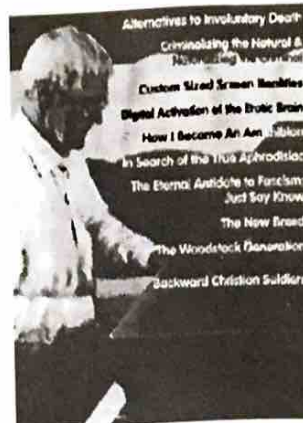
Matrix News
..by Matrix Information and Delivery Services, Inc.
\$2⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
ZINE-02

Latest news, charts and tables full of info about the Matrix: Internet + Fidonet + BITNET, etc. Learn how it's put together — by sampling from here or in monthly installments if you subscribe.



Various...
..by Richard Gardner
\$16⁰⁰ + \$3⁰⁰ ship
ZINE-03

Chaos conceptual art at a business reply rate: "My friend Don and I get a lot of 'stuff' in the mail. We also manage to collect a lot of 'things' in our travels. All those 'objects' that are 8.5 by 11 inches end up in one of these here books." It's rather bizarre, but even the critics who pick up this book tend to sit down and read it cover-to-cover for at least a half hour: "The most interesting book on your coffee table or in your reception room..."



Timothy Leary's Greatest Hits
..by KnoWare
\$15⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MUSE-01

Signed, limited edition of monographs including: *Alternatives to Involuntary Death*, *Criminalizing the Natural & Naturalizing the Criminal*, *How I Became An Amphibian*, *The Eternal Antidote to Facism: Just Say Know*, and more!



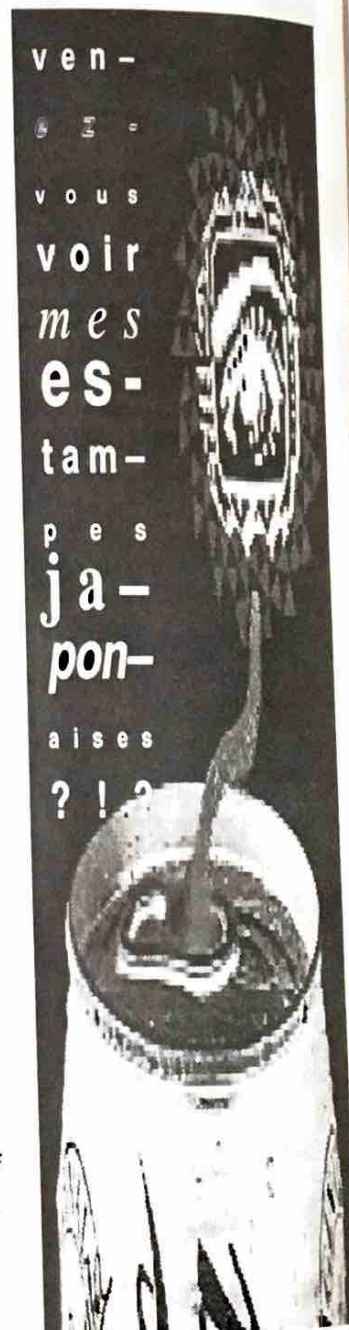
DIS 222
..by Dissemination Network
\$4⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MUSE-02

Texas' premier Tek-Know™ video/muse artists — featured recently at the '93 SXSW Int'l Music Festival in Austin. Listen as DIS NET samples and scratches their way through cyberpunk social conscience with demo cuts: *Aliasia*, *? Of Authority*, *Information Overdose*, *In - Formation*



Flux Oersted Tapes
..by Robitron Software
\$4⁰⁰ + \$0⁰⁰ ship
MUSE-03

"Music from the fringes of the electromagnetic field." Subversive, computer augmented songs recorded by robitron aka Flux Oersted



FRINGE WARE REVIEW

mission:

FringeWare, Inc. (FWI) is a commercial enterprise dedicated to *Community Development around a Fringe Marketplace*. Welcome to Neotribalism in the Global Village, 1990!

We focus on publications and events — and also sell a variety of products along the way — through endeavor in the following business:

- Publishing printed and electronic periodicals, including *Fringe Ware Review* and *Unshaved Truths*.
- Moderating an Internet mailing list for information from/about the cultural and technological fringes, and providing an automated list server for **FWI** archives.
- Operating a retail outlet and a mail order service, selling non-mainstream software, gizmos, DIY supplies, wearable subversive memes, etc. Our current retail outlet is located in: Europa Books, 2406 Guadalupe, Austin, Texas, USA. Our mail order address is P.O. Box 49921, Austin, TX 78765-9921 USA (phone +1 512 477 1366).
- Organizing events in cooperation with other like-minded firms and organizations. *Catch us at raves!*

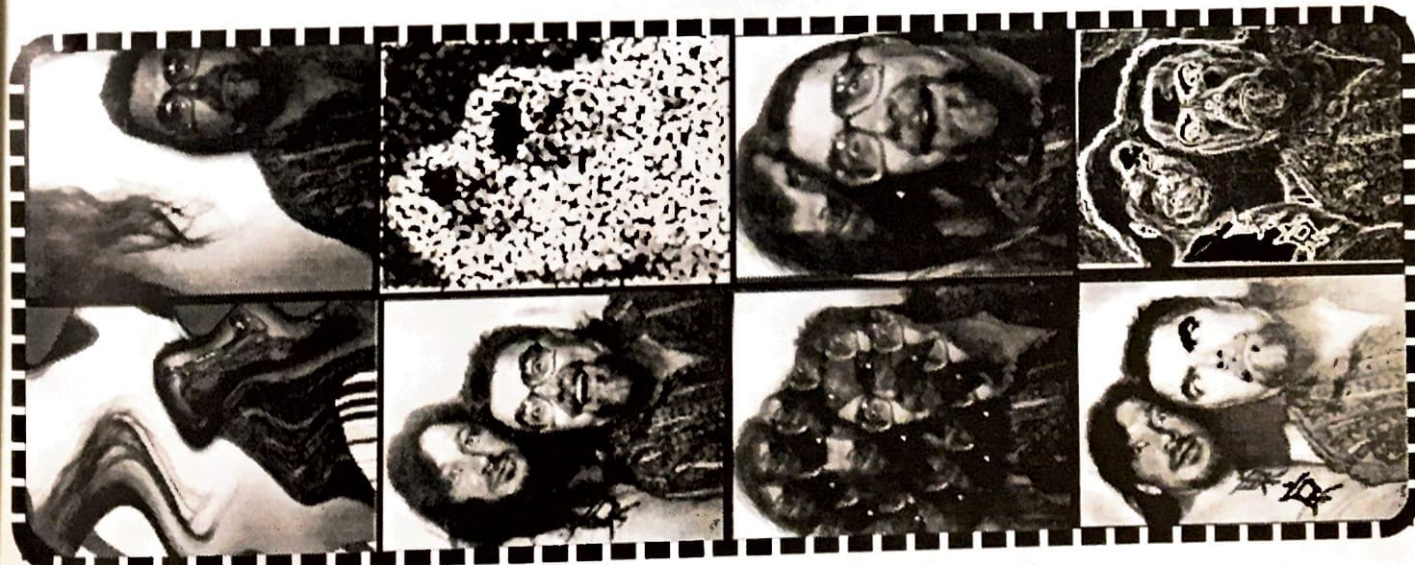
We've learned that people can survive quite nicely without huge corporations, huge governments, and huge dogmas pushing their lives. So here's the **FringeWare** alternative:



Start your own "corporation." Trade with other like-minded people throughout the Global Village. Encourage innovation and promote entrepreneurship. Promote fair, cooperative business practices. Emphasize products that facilitate creativity, health, and play. Explore consciousness alternatives. Build community through advanced, available technologies, e.g. computer networks. Respect and consider the natural environment by promoting sustainable resource use. Thrive on sweat and wit and the strangeness of kind people.

Welcome to the Fringes of art, technology, and society. From here innovation emerges, and survival — through cooperation and use of the unexpected, *counts*.

1/e²



fringeware inc.

